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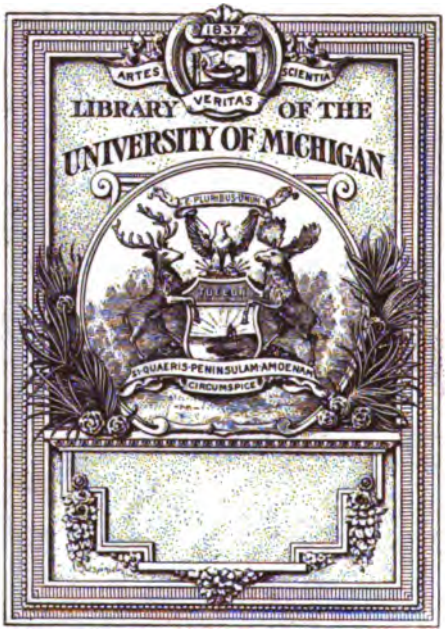

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THE

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JULY 1856.

ART. I.—THOMAS MOORE.

Memoirs, Journal, and Correspondence of Thomas Moore. Edited by the Right Honourable Lord John Russell, M.P. London: Longman, Brown, Green, and Longmans, 1853–1856.

IT is the favourite notion of modern biographers that a man ought to be made to write his own life; that a vivid and faithful image can only be obtained, and can be fully obtained, from the self-delineation, conscious or unconscious, of the man himself, in memoirs or letters. This is one of those ideas which carry so plausible a self-recommendation with them, that they are accepted without examination; and it is not until they have been worked some time as undoubted truths, that, in the course of wear and tear, they begin to betray their alloy of error. The fact is, that though some degree of direct self-delineation may be necessary to supply any complete conception of a man, yet without accessory sources of information it can never be sufficient; and for this there are several simple and sufficient reasons. A man won't tell us all about himself, nor can he if he would. Even a man like Rousseau, who makes it his special boast to let shameless day into the most secret recesses of his life and heart, yet keeps a shade for the devouring cankers of vanity and self-love, which eat deeper and more festering sores than even his morbid taste can bear to probe. We all have two opinions of ourselves: sane men look at the better one, and shake off the terror of the other; and that occasional recurrence to it by which every now and then we balance our self-estimate is not a thing we can place at the disposal of those around us. Nor would we if we could. We can more easily bear to think ill of ourselves than to have others do so; and the allusion by our friends to

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faults of which we stand self-convicted, yet hoped were hidden, strikes us as one of the most flagrant forms of scandal. Besides we do not know all about ourselves: more than any other we know; but we are not only the being we appear to ourselves, we are also in some sense what we appear to others; and though we should hardly be willing to exchange our self-knowledge for that of others, yet should

> "The Gods the giftie gie us
> To see ourselves as others see us,"

it would certainly add, however unpleasantly, to the gross amount of our information. Hence, when we read the life of a remarkable man, we wish to know not only what he chooses to divulge of what he knows of himself, or what he unconsciously reveals in his writings; we wish also to know what impression he produced on external observers. Moreover, if a biography is to be a work of art, we must have a biographer: the work must bear the stamp of a creating mind—the artist, as well as the subject of his art, must have a recognisable impress. Rembrandt looks out from the canvas on which he paints the portrait of some burgomaster, and it is the spirit of Claude that is infused through those serene Italian landscapes. Nothing but a daguerreotype *can* be a mere copy; and what a daguerreotype is to a landscape, are diaries and letters to a biography,—an image true only of certain features, necessarily distorted in others, and not a work of art. But we like to have a work of art. We enjoy a pleasure from our sympathy with the creative spirit it displays, and we enjoy the reflected light thrown on the biographer. What would Johnson's life be without the naïve idolatry of Boswell? It is the salt of the whole, and gives the point to half the anecdotes. Moore himself notes down a happy case in point: "Boswell mentions Johnson saying to him, one night when they were sleeping in the same room and conversing, 'If you don't stop talking, sir, I will get up and tie you to the bed-post.' I mention this (adds Boswell) to show the faculty he had of placing his adversary in a ridiculous position." What would the story be without the comment? What should we have learned of this same Samuel Johnson from his memoirs and correspondence? Fancy eight volumes of them. We should have had not a monument, but a sesquipedalian sarcophagus. Sometimes, indeed, the individuality of the historian is so prominent as to give the leading characteristic to his work, as when Carlyle uses history and biography as wax on which to stamp the image of his own mind, or Defoe ascribes his own marked traits of character alike to harlots, pirates, princes, quakers, and cavaliers. We are not urging that a biography is always better read-

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ing than a diary, only that it has a completeness the latter never can have. Even where a man writes his own life, as no doubt he may do,—re-creates himself as it were, casts his own idea of himself into form,—such an image, though probably more exact, minute, and life-like than any other, will still be partial. As a man can never see his whole image in a glass, so he can never form a complete reflection of himself in his own mind. The external biographer meanwhile can walk round him; though he can never get quite close, he can gather up a thousand clues from the observation of others; fragmentary, and often, no doubt, delusive, yet still carrying with them on the whole, to a man of discrimination and imaginative insight, sufficient indicia of their truth or falsehood. From these and from his own experience,—for the biographer does not occupy the most favourable position for the exercise of his art unless he has himself been intimate with his subject,—a man of genius may form a more complete, and on the whole a more truthful, image of another than any man can give of himself.

As to letters, usually so much relied on, they are of all things the most fallacious indications of character, whether they be the letters to a man or the letters from him. We don't write to a man to tell him what we think of him; we would not for the world he should know,—we wish to be agreeable, especially to our best friends, who are the people with whose faults we are most familiar: on the other hand, when we write, it is not to betray ourselves; and even in the very frankest and most intimate self-revelations of friendship and love, we unconsciously, and even necessarily distort the proportions and soften the edges of our characters. A sphere of isolation is granted to, nay forced upon each one of us; to be known strikes us as fearful, yet to be unknown carries with it sometimes a feeling of loneliness still more terrible, and a harassing sense of a want of genuineness in our relations to others. And hence it is one of the profoundest consolations and most enduring sustainments which Religion brings to the perplexed spirits of men, that it assures them of the presence of One by whom they are known even as they are, through every ravelled thread and fine-spun filament of their complicated existences—makes them feel that they are embraced and comprehended; and though an insoluble problem to themselves and others, are not without an explanation, a purpose, and a place.

Moreover, the degree in which a man's writings image himself varies infinitely. Some men know themselves, others don't; some write themselves, others are of so chameleon-like a nature that they take a tinge of each person whom they address, and in writing to a man become for a moment like him—their very

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handwriting will often bear traces from the letter they are answering. Different lives are not alike expressible; some men live in thought, some in action, some in feeling. Different men express different sides of their character, often not the predominant one. A reserved man of feeling tells you only what he is doing; a thoughtful man of action (like Dr. Arnold, for instance) tells you of what he is thinking. Some men are not themselves when they write their letters: they become a correspondent. Do Pope's letters tell us any thing about him? He was thinking of absolutely nothing in writing them but of what would make a well-turned epistle; it is like reading deal-boards to peruse them.

Lord John Russell has not chosen to take the trouble of writing his friend's life. He has not even chosen to do common justice to the materials in his hands. Without the loss of a single trait of character, however minute, they might have been compressed into readable limits, and made into an interesting and entertaining book, instead of being flung in a mass before us, encumbered with a thousand characterless details and endless repetitions. Moore kept this diary as memoranda for memoirs he intended to write: he did not think the world would be called on to read it at large. He must be a very great man indeed of whom we wish to know where he dined seven days in the week. Much of this sort of thing would have been well exchanged for some fuller evidence from Lord John himself as to the habits and character of a man with whom he was intimate for so many years. The editor, however, has preferred a less laborious course. He supplies a short preface, insisting on one or two characteristics made sufficiently obvious in the voluminous pages of the diary, quotes from the biographies of Scott and Byron one or two tributes to his genius, and furnishes us at very disproportionate length with his own views about Tasso. Having done thus much, he launches us without further guide into a sea of letters and diaries, and concludes the work with a few pages of postscript, which add nothing to our knowledge of the man. From these, and from the various hints with which contemporary literature abounds, those of a generation too late to have known him in his prime must form their idea of the life and character of Moore.

It is not a difficult character to estimate. It contains none of those strongly-marked contrasts which make Byron an enigma. It is the easier because it is always the same. Most men go through more or less of a process of development in their passage through life, and are different at different stages. Some slowly change, and you can mark the process; others move *per saltum*, and you see only the two contrasted pictures. Shake-

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speare's Harry Prince of Wales transformed to Henry the Fifth is no more untrue to nature than Crabbe's Edward Shore, veering in slow gradation from a man of genius to an idiot. Wellington, playing in Committee with his "quiz," and in whose "vacant face" Luttrell read that he at least would never succeed,—who can trace by what changes he became the writer of the Peninsular despatches? Moore, however, never seems to have altered. We see him on his first introduction to the stage, a little, round-faced, buoyant, clever, and pleasantly self-conceited child, with a wonderful faculty of making himself welcome, a healthy zest for enjoyment, and true and tender affections; through life, till the seclusion of his last retreat shuts him from the world, he remains exactly the same, except that he grows larger and dresses differently.

From his mother he seems to have derived his gay, pleasure-loving disposition, his passion for music, and his taste for social enjoyments. But she was also his sedulous instructress, and carefully studied every opportunity of forwarding his progress in knowledge and his advancement in the world. When she came home late, she would sometimes rouse him at one or two in the morning to hear him repeat his school-lessons; an untimely solicitude to which her son declares he cheerfully submitted. She made friends with his masters, and got them to teach him in the evenings; scraped together money for a pianoforte, and had him instructed in music; and seems to have pushed him forward in every way with a mixture of indulgence and stimulants exactly suited to his disposition.

It was at a grocer's shop in Dublin (on the 28th May 1779, according to his own account) that Tom Moore was born, and passed the first nineteen years of his life. His parents, though low in the social scale, were not vulgar. Of his father we hear little; but his letters are well-written sensible productions, and his son describes him as "one of Nature's gentlemen." He had, he tells us, a quiet searching humour, which he did not scruple to exercise on the priests of his own faith, to the mingled amusement and annoyance of his wife, who was a sincere and even superstitious Catholic. "I vow to God, Jack Moore," she would say, "I am ashamed of you." It was she who made the two little drawing-rooms and the adjoining closet the scene of those crowded and delightful little supper-parties, in the midst of whose genial social festivities her son was brought up; here he learnt to associate jollity and "the bowl," not with mere hard drinking and roaring of choruses in male society, but with those more refined and intellectual enjoyments from which he never disconnected them. The presence of women, of wit, and of kindly fellowship, went always to his idea of a feast; and the

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association was no doubt founded in these experiences of his youth. Music was never wanting: Wesley Doyle and Joe Kelly sang their duets; his mother subscribed her share, singing in a 'soft, clear voice,' "How sweet in the woodlands;" and Master Tom was wont to give with no small *éclat* Dibdin's songs and the duet with Norah in the "Poor Soldier." He was a precocious boy,—"an old little crab," as a rival Irish Cornelia once somewhat splenetically observed,—but precocious only in the liveliness and quickness of his parts; he did not anticipate manhood, it may almost be questioned whether he ever reached it. He wanted always something of the grave sense of responsibility which manhood generally brings. But though many men are children all their lives, Tom Moore was something much rarer—all his life a well-bred little boy. When quite a child, he could sing a song or recite a poem so as to give real pleasure to his hearers; and no embarrassing modesty on the part of himself or his friends prevented his talents being displayed to the best advantage. At the age of eleven he was employed in some of the private theatricals, then much the rage, to recite an epilogue, and then first saw his name in print:—"Epilogue: A Squeeze to St. Paul's: Master Moore." At the same age he wrote his first regular poem, quizzing the use of the quiz, a favourite toy of the day. Soon after we find him penning his epilogue for himself, and yet by no means affecting the gravity of precocious youth; but so enamoured of the part of Harlequin, that he would dream of good spirits presenting him with a genuine parti-coloured suit, and devoted himself to mastering the headforemost leap by sedulous practice over the rail of a tent-bed. At the age of fourteen he wrote verses which were printed in the *Anthologia Hibernica* as "by Master Thomas Moore," and some of which unequivocally anticipate his style of song-writing, and are not very inferior to some of his mature productions. Nor was his rhetorical skill without similar juvenile antecedents:

"As our house was far from spacious, the bed-room which I occupied was but a corner of that in which these two clerks slept, boarded off, and fitted up with a bed, a table, and a chest of drawers, with a bookcase over it; and here, as long as my mother's brother continued to be an inmate of our family, he and I slept together. After he left us, however, to board and lodge elsewhere, I had this little nook to myself, and proud enough was I of my *own* apartment. Upon the door, and upon every other vacant space which my boundaries supplied, I placed inscriptions of my own composition, in the manner, as I flattered myself, of Shenstone's at the Leasowes. Thinking it the grandest thing in the world to be at the head of some literary institution, I organised my two shop-friends, Tom Ennis and Johnny Delany,

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into a debating and literary society, of which I constituted myself the president; and our meetings, as long as they lasted, were held once or twice a week, in a small closet belonging to the bed-room off which mine was partitioned. When there was no company of an evening, the two clerks always supped at the same time with the family; taking their bread and cheese and beer, while my father and mother had their regular meat supper, with the usual adjunct, never omitted by my dear father through the whole of his long and hale life, of a tumbler of whisky-punch. It was after this meal that my two literary associates and myself, used (unknown, of course, to my father and mother) to retire, on the evenings of our meetings, to the little closet beyond the bed-room, and there hold our sittings. In addition to the other important proceedings that occupied us, each member was required to produce an original enigma, or rebus, in verse, which the others were bound, if possible, to explain; and I remember one night, Tom Ennis, who was in general very quick at these things, being exceedingly mortified at not being able to make out a riddle which the president (my august self) had proposed to the assembly. After various fruitless efforts on his part, we were obliged to break up for the night, leaving my riddle still unsolved. After I had been some hours asleep, however, I was awakened by a voice from my neighbour's apartment, crying out lustily, 'a drum! a drum! a drum!' while at the same time the action was suited to the word by a most vigorous thumping of a pair of fists against my wooden partition. It was Tom Ennis, who had been lying awake all those hours endeavouring to find out the riddle, and now thus vociferously announced to me his solution of it."

Even the triumphs and flatteries showered upon the national poet in the highest meridian of his fame read much like the account of his ovations as a schoolboy, when, on his Saturday returns from school, there "generally came with my sister a number of young girls to meet me, and, full of smiles and welcome, walked by the side of my pony into the town!"

The history of his college life contains little remarkable, though it passed at a remarkable time, and is only worth noting because it shows already formed the same character and disposition which attended him through life. He was at college in the year 1797. Surrounded by all the excitements of the United Irish conspiracy, at that time approaching its crisis, and the feverish temper which then prevailed throughout Irish society, of an ardent temperament, endowed with no slight intellectual powers, and at the age when danger and self-sacrifice are in themselves part of the temptations to engage in a great cause,—it is most characteristic of him that he stood entirely aloof from the United Irish societies then forming within the college; and warmly as he sympathised with the general principles, if not the direct objects of the conspirators, never took any practical share in the movement. He wrote, indeed, an article, which was looked upon as

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"very bold," in their organ, the *Press;* but this only indicates still more clearly his true position; for it was evidently written not with the idea of promoting a particular view or object, but from a desire to exercise his talents and see himself in print. Strong as were his home affections and his habits of filial obedience, the anxious dissuasions of his mother could never have sufficed to keep him in safety, had not his own marked taste for self-preservation been early developed, and had not his whole character led him to take an external interest rather than a personal share in action. When, however, the inquiry into the spread of the United Irish societies within the college was conducted under the formidable auspices of Chancellor Fitzgibbon, young Moore showed another side of his character. It was a tribunal whose temper and demeanour were well calculated to shake the nerves of any young man, and which held over him the penalty of expulsion from the University and exclusion from the learned professions. On this occasion the boy of eighteen showed a moral courage and a ready command of his faculties which never failed him in his dealings with men. His account of the scene was long ago published in one of his prefaces to the collected edition of his poems; but we cite it, as a just testimony to the high spirit and collected bearing which always distinguished him. He was not a man to volunteer into danger for others; but he was the last to save himself from a common danger by any base compromise:

"At last my awful turn came, and I stood in presence of the terrific tribunal. There sat the formidable Fitzgibbon, whose name I had never heard connected but with domineering insolence and cruelty; and by his side the memorable 'Paddy' Duigenan,—memorable, at least, to all who lived in those dark times for his eternal pamphlets sounding the tocsin of persecution against the Catholics.

The oath was proffered to me. 'I have an objection, my lord,' said I, in a clear firm voice,—'I have an objection to taking this oath.' —'What's your objection, sir?' he asked sternly. 'I have no fear, my lord, that any thing I might say would criminate myself, but it might tend to affect others; and I must say that I despise that person's character who could be led under any circumstances to criminate his associates.' This was aimed at some of the revelations of the preceding day, and, as I learned afterwards, was so felt. 'How old are you, sir?' I told him my age,—between seventeen and eighteen, though looking, I dare say, not more than fourteen or fifteen. He then turned to his assessor, Duigenan, and exchanged a few words with him in an under voice. 'We cannot,' he resumed, again looking towards me,—'we cannot allow any person to remain in our University who would refuse to take this oath.'—'I shall, then, my lord,' I replied, 'take the oath, still reserving to myself the power of refusing to answer any such questions as I have described.' 'We do not sit here to argue with

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you, sir,' he rejoined, sharply; upon which I took the oath, and seated myself in the witness's chair.

The following were the questions and answers that then ensued; and I can pretty well pledge myself for their almost verbal accuracy, as well as for that of the conversation which preceded them. After having adverted to the proved existence of United Irish societies in the University, he asked, 'Have you ever belonged to any of these societies?' 'No, my lord.'—'Have you ever known of any of the proceedings which took place in them?' 'No, my lord.'—'Did you ever hear of a proposal at any of their meetings for the purchase of arms and ammunition?' 'No, my lord.'—'Did you ever hear of a proposition made in one of these societies with respect to the expediency of assassination?' 'O, no, my lord.'—He then turned again to Duigenan, and after a few words with him resumed: 'When such are the answers you are able to give, pray what was the cause of your great repugnance to taking the oath?' 'I have already told you, my lord, my chief reasons; in addition to which, it was the first oath I ever took, and it was, I think, a very natural hesitation.'—I was told afterwards that a fellow of the college, named Stokes (a man of liberal politics, who had alleged, as one of the grounds of his dislike to this inquisition, the impropriety of putting oaths to such young men), turned round, on hearing this last reply, to some one who sat next him, and said, 'That's the best answer that has been given yet.'"

Fortunately, he escaped without questions leading to the crimination of others. The deliberate conclusion to which he, and also his father and mother, had arrived in their previous consultations was, that if such questions should be put, he must refuse to answer, and incur the heavy penalties overhanging such recusancy. The actual outbreak of the conspiracy took place when Moore was confined by illness.

In 1798 he left the University; and early in the next year took his way to London, in order to enter himself a member of the Middle Temple. The funds were supplied by his mother, who had long been saving every penny she could get together for that object. She sewed the guineas into the waistband of Tom's pantaloons with a scapular, or small piece of cloth blessed by the priest, and sent him out into the world at the age of nineteen to seek his fortune.

His first visit to London was a short one; he ingratiated himself with his Irish friends there, lived in lodgings at six shillings a week, and dined cheaply at the French eating-houses. Like all other boys leaving home, he is somewhat out of spirits, and proud of his economy in tea. He had brought with him his translation of Anacreon, the fruit of his college studies in love and Greek; and having been discouraged from his original idea of submitting it for the patronage of the college authorities, he arranged for its publication in London. In the mean time, how-

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ever, he returned home; and, after a three months' stay, came back to England in October, furnished with an introduction to Lord Moira, whom he visited at Donnington. This was his first introduction to aristocratic life. Lord Moira lighted him to his bed-room, and he thought it all very fine and very uncomfortable. But he is soon to become familiar with the great world. Wherever he goes he makes friends. He is excellent company. The doctors take to him, and introduce him to their patients. It is determined to publish his *Anacreon* by subscription. Mr. Campbell and Mr. Tinker pay him his first two hard guineas. Mr. Biggin, who gave his name to and derived his fortune from his invention in coffee-pots, patronises him. The Marquis of Lansdowne requests his name may be put down, and so does Mrs. Fitzherbert. Dr. Lawrence reads the manuscript, and gives a written opinion that it is "in many parts very elegant and poetical," and that "in some passages Mr. Moore has added a pretty turn not to be found in the original." The Duke of Bedford is secured. "Every thing goes on delightfully." Meanwhile, in the spring of the next year (1800) the young poet is brought to death's door by an abscess in his side; but he fights cheerfully through it, and his last effort while capable and his first on recovery is to dispel the anxiety of those at home. In May, he is already in the full tide of London gaiety. "I am just going out to dinner, and then to two parties in the evening. —This is the way we live in London, no less than three every evening. *Vive la bagatelle!* 'Away with melancholy!'" The Prince subscribes, and permits *Anacreon* to be dedicated to him. Moore is introduced to him, and finds his manners "very fascinating."

"When I was presented to him, he said he was very happy to know a *man of my abilities;* and when I thanked him for the honour he did me in permitting the dedication of *Anacreon*, he stopped me, and said the honour was *entirely* his, in being *allowed* to put his name to a work of such merit. He then said that he hoped, when he returned to town in the winter, we should have many opportunities of *enjoying each other's society;* that he was passionately fond of music, and had long heard of my talents in that way."

At a later time the Prince was doomed to hear of his talents in another way. Even then, young as he was, Moore's was not a temper to be overwhelmed by patronage, however illustrious and condescending; and he prefixed to his book a brief and manly dedication without any fustian or adulation in it. He has a good opinion of his own work. The authorities of his college don't even care to buy it, which naturally makes him angry; and thus he vents his indignation:

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"I have written a Greek ode, which is now before the tribunal of Dr. Lawrence; and, if he approve of it, I shall have it prefixed to the *Anacreon*. *This*, I hope, will astonish the scoundrelly monks of Trinity, not one of whom, I perceive, except the Provost and my tutor, have subscribed to the work. Heaven knows they ought to rejoice at any thing like an effort of literature coming out of their leaden body! I can do without them; but tell Phipps that I will not put F.T.C.D. after his name, as I should be ashamed of the world's observing that but one of the fellows of the university where I graduated gave his tribute to a classical undertaking of this kind. They are a cursed corporation of boobies! and if it were not for my friend, their Provost, the public should know my opinion of them."

Before the middle of the next summer he has published his Little's Poems. They are "very much admired, and increase his fame." Sir James Mackintosh is the first to recommend them to Mr. Rogers's serious perusal. Moore has no suspicion there is any harm in them. He sends a copy to his mother. The world has been apt to think him a young libertine on the strength of them; but bad as they are—and such things as Little's Poems are about the most mischievous things a man can write—still they must not be exactly considered as evidences of his way of life. He was always an amateur rake rather than a real one. His boyish, careless, and unapprehensive spirit did not trouble itself as to the consequences of such a publication, nor had he any of that conscientiousness which leads a man anxiously to investigate the boundary-line of right and wrong. It was enough for him that Beza had written *Juvenilia*, and that Bembo made a very good cardinal. He wrote of these things a little more guardedly as he grew older. He found it judicious to do so; but the inspiration was of the same order. Love, in his descriptive and poetic expression of it, is always, with one or two not very successful dramatic exceptions, a mingling of sensuous fancy and affection, warm and tender, not deep and fervent; a sparkling flame, not the red heat of an engrossing passion; the refinement of which his admirers speak is the refinement of a delicate organisation, never that of a pure spirit. His friend Atkinson's vindication of him, as handed down by Leigh Hunt, sounds ludicrous as applied to a little man past forty, but undoubtedly presents him in a point of view that has a good deal of truth in it. "Sir, they may talk of Moore as they please; but I tell you that I always consider him—I always consider my friend Thomas Moore as an infant sporting on the bosom of Venus."

Meanwhile his singing has become the rage in London. Every house is open to him, and his society is courted and the most flattering attentions showered on him in every quarter. He

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enjoys it all with the zest of one-and-twenty. He is equal to his fortunes—he is vain of his success; but his is not that most offensive form of vanity, a stifled internal swelling with demure exterior, but he openly enjoys the triumphs he feels he deserves, and gaily boasts of them to his home circle, where he knows they will give pleasure:

"How d'ye do, my dearest mother? Did you see my name in the paper among the lists of company at most of the late routs? This is a foolish custom adopted here, of printing the names of the most *distinguished personages* that are at the great parties, and Mr. *Moore*, I assure you, is not forgotten. I have an idea of going down to Donington Park, to seclude myself for about a month in the library there: they are all in town, but Lord Moira tells me I may have an apartment there whenever I wish. 'Tis a long time since I heard from you. Are you all well and happy? Grierson has not left this yet. I dined yesterday with George Ogle, and he was there. I met the Prince at supper at Lady Harrington's, on Monday night; he is always very polite to me. You cannot think how much my songs are liked here. Monk Lewis was 'in the greatest agonies' the other night at Lady Donegal's, at having come in after my songs: ''Pon his honour, he had come for the express purpose of hearing me.' Write to me soon, dearest little mamma, and tell me you are well."

At the age of twenty-three he declines with scorn an offer of the Irish Laureateship, to be held on the same terms as the English one:

"My dearest mother,—Yesterday I received my good father's letter: it was quite a cordial to me, and *decided* my conduct instantly. Never could I have had the faintest idea of accepting so paltry and degrading a stipend, if I had not the *urging* apprehension that my dears at home wanted it; but Heaven be praised that you are not in *instant* necessity for an assistance which necessity alone could reconcile. I will do *better* for you, at least *as well*, by means more grateful to my feelings. The manner in which Mr. Wickham communicated the circumstance to me would disgust any man with the least spirit of independence about him. I accordingly, yesterday, after the receipt of my father's letter, enclosed the Ode for the Birthday, at the same time resigning the situation, and I slept sounder last night in consequence, than, I assure you, I have done for some time. It would place me on '*a ladder*' indeed, but a ladder which has but the *one rank*, where I should stand stationary for ever. Feeble as my hopes are of advancement under government, I should be silly to resign them, without absolute necessity, for a gift which would authorise them to consider me provided for, and leave me without a chance of any other or further advantage: it would 'write me down an *ass*' and a *poet* for ever!"

This "authorise them to consider me provided for" is delightful from a young man whose claims on Government con-

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sisted in his having paraphrased Anacreon, published Little's Poems, and written a Candid Appeal to Public Confidence. Lord Moira, however, had led him to form hopes of "being provided for;" hopes which he seems to have unduly encouraged and ultimately not very gracefully disappointed. He made, indeed, his father barrack-master in Dublin, and at the end of 1803 he obtained for Moore himself the office of registrar in the Court of Admiralty in Bermuda. This appointment took him to the island, and on his return he made a short tour in America and Canada. Wherever he went he gathered new acquaintance and left regrets behind him. The gun-room officers of the Phaeton frigate, in which he went out, found him as pleasant and indispensable a companion as the fine ladies in London, and the first lieutenant repented of his first impression. "I thought you," said he, "the first day you came on board, the damndest conceited little fellow I ever saw, with your glass cocked up to your eye."

As soon as he got home, he set to work to extract some profit at least from his journey, for he had found his appointment promised to be of very slight value; and early in 1806 he published a volume of miscellaneous poems, most of them founded on his Bermudan and American experiences. These poems contain little of any value. The Americans did not produce a favourable impression on their visitor. He shot a very penetrating glance into their defects: stigmatising their political vices as those not of an unripe but of an effete civilisation; and a portion of his book is occupied by some sharp satire on their less agreeable national characteristics, especially on the discrepancy between American praises of freedom and practice of slavery. The description of Bermudan scenery, and the poems to Nea, have had their warm admirers, perhaps have yet; but the love-poetry is of that seidlitz-powder kind which after it has effervesced in one generation is not often tasted in another. They seem to spring more from his own personal feeling, indeed, than most of his poems; but even in this case we learn from himself that the Nea of his adoration was a fancied compound of two real individuals. From Canada he brought the Canadian boat-song, which, as he long ago explained, is *not* what the Canadian boatmen sing.

It was Jeffrey's review of these "Odes and Epistles" in the *Edinburgh* that led to the famous rencontre between the poet and his critic, and furnished so much amusement to the town. As Sir Robert Peel drew up and left behind him a vindication of his political conduct, so Mr. Moore has handed down to posterity an elaborate memorial on this important meeting, and proves satisfactorily that he really was in earnest, and that there were *bonâ fide* bullets and not paper pellets in the pistols. The hostile meeting was succeeded by a pacific one at Mr. Rogers's, where

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the belligerents were reconciled, and became thenceforward fast friends. In 1808 he published two satires, *Corruption* and *Intolerance;* and in the next year another, the *Sceptic,* which he called a philosophical satire, though it has not much either of philosophy or satire in it. Fortunately, all these poems are short. They consist of declamatory matter, not undefaced, when he touches on Irish Catholic persecutions, with some traces of that sort of screaming vituperation common to Irish patriots and angry women; but which was not natural to Moore, and from which both his sense and taste in general kept him free.

On the other hand, there are in these satires couplets scarcely inferior to Pope in neatness and point; such as,

> "But bees, on flowers alighting, cease to hum;
> So, settling upon places, Whigs grow dumb."

Or—

> "The smith of Ephesus thought Dian's shrine,
> By which his craft must thrive, the most divine;
> And even the true faith seems not half so true
> When linked with *one* good living as with *two*.
> Had Walcot first been pensioned by the throne,
> Kings would have suffered by his praise alone;
> And Paine, perhaps, for something snug per ann.,
> Had laughed, like Wellesley, at all Rights of Man."

These productions fell dead. They were a mistake, and a very unaccountable one to be made by a man who had already touched the poetical pulse of the time. They were written in direct imitation of a past school; and any man who chooses to imitate his ancestors in his writings will have the mortification of finding that though he may write much better things than they did, his contemporaries will think the ancestral writing very fine, but not read his.

The *Sceptic* has an interest, as no doubt shadowing forth to some extent the attitude of his own mind in matters of theological belief. It describes in a superficial way some of the forms of human error, and concludes with some good lines inculcating a general suspense of opinion as the only wise attitude of mind:

> "Hail, modest Ignorance, thou goal and prize,—
> Thou last, best knowledge of the simple wise!
> Hail, humble Doubt! when Error's waves are past,
> How sweet to reach thy sheltered port at last;
> And there, by changing skies nor lured nor awed,
> Smile at the battling winds that roar abroad!
>
> There gentle Charity, who knows how frail
> The bark of Virtue, even in summer's gale,
> Sits by the nightly fire, whose beacon glows
> For all who wander, whether friends or foes.
> There Faith retires, and keeps her white sail furl'd,
> Till call'd to spread it for a better world;

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While Patience, watching on the weedy shore,
And mutely waiting till the storm be o'er,
Oft turns to Hope, who still directs her eye
To some blue spot, just breaking in the sky.
Such are the mild, the blest associates given
To him who doubts,—and trusts in naught but Heaven!"

His scepticism, however, never extends to the fundamental axioms of faith. He speaks with some contempt of religious forms; but never of the substance of religion. He was subject to accesses of emotional piety, and seems always to have felt a religious trust in the Divine Providence, deepened by the sorrows of his later years. His attitude in matters of theological opinion is peculiar and characteristic. He liked to know about these things, and was well informed on them. He wrote an article on the Fathers in the *Edinburgh Review:* he published a vindication of the Roman Catholic religion. But he never cared to use his knowledge to make up his own opinions. He was born a Roman Catholic, and continued so till his death: partly from a principle of honour which made him feel it an unworthy thing to desert the religion of his parents and country; partly because he had no definite call to be any thing else. Truth of fact he was always solicitous about: truth of opinion never interested him the least. "I wish," he said, "men would oftener give us what they *read* than what they *think*." He had a lively, well-strung intellect, a good memory, and a sound judgment as far as it went. He was very capable of forming right conclusions on matters either personal or political which came immediately before him and required no very comprehensive view; but of the investigatory mind he had no trace. As long as his watch went well, he was not a man to examine into its construction. His adhesion to the Roman Church was a very loose one. As early as at the age of eighteen he ceased to attend confession. "We are told," he says, "that such pain and humiliation are salutary to the mind, and I am not prepared to deny it, the practice of confession as a moral restraint having both sound arguments and high authority in its favour." It might be a very good thing, and it might not; for himself, he found it irksome, and let it alone. In a similar spirit he seems to have waved any practical compliance with the ceremonies and ordinances of his Church. He was not unwilling to be taken for a member of the Church of England. Lord Lansdowne, after being intimate with him for years, learns for the first time that he is a Catholic; and there is a passage in one of his prefaces in which, speaking of himself as the author of the *Twopenny Postbag* under the pseudonym of Mr. Brown, he seems desirous, to say the least of it, to gather all the credit of occasional conformity. "To the charge of being an

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Irishman, poor Mr. Brown pleads guilty, and I believe it must also be acknowledged that he comes of a Roman Catholic family: an avowal which I am aware is decisive of his utter reprobation in the eyes of those exclusive patentees of Christianity, so worthy to have been the followers of a certain enlightened Bishop Donatus, who held 'that God is in Africa and *not elsewhere*.' But from all this it does not necessarily follow that Mr. Brown is a Papist, and, indeed, I have the strongest reasons for suspecting that they who say so are somewhat mistaken. Not that I presume to have ascertained his opinions upon such subjects. All I profess to know of his orthodoxy is, that he has a Protestant wife and two or three little Protestant children, and that he has been seen at church every Sunday for a whole year together, listening to the sermons of his truly reverend and amiable friend, Dr. ——, and behaving there as well and as orderly as most people."

On another occasion he speaks in no very measured terms of Dublin politicians and the Roman Catholic faith: "If there is any thing in the world that I have been detesting and despising more than another for this long time past, it has been those very Dublin politicians whom you so fear I should associate with. I do not think a good cause was ever ruined by a more bigoted, brawling, and disgusting set of demagogues; and, though it be the religion of my fathers, I must say that much of this vile vulgar spirit is to be traced to that wretched faith, which is again polluting Europe with Jesuitism and inquisitions, and which of all the humbugs that have stultified mankind is the most narrow-minded and mischievous: so much for the danger of my joining Messrs. O'Connell, O'Donnell, &c."

From the period of his return from America to 1811 Moore continued sometimes in London, sometimes at Donnington (where Lord Moira provided him a place of country seclusion in the absence of the family), sometimes in Dublin, revolving sundry literary schemes, writing Irish melodies and songs, trying his hand at an opera, very busy under the stimulus of a failing exchequer, and very gay whether it is full or empty. His plan seems always to have been to get the money, and often to spend it, before he wrote the poem. Such an arrangement might have offered some temptations to undue procrastination or neglect to a man less scrupulously nice in fulfilling his engagements than Moore always showed himself. He has perfect confidence in his genius: it can and must yield him bread. "I hate to make a conscript of my Muse; but I cannot carry on the war without her, so to it she must go."

In March 1811 he married. His wife was a Miss Dyke, of whom we only learn that she came from Kilkenny, and

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had appeared on the Irish stage. Moving in the society he did, Moore might, no doubt, have found an opportunity of contracting a "good" matrimonial alliance. He was not the man to attempt it. In the first place, though his tastes and principles were worldly, his heart was never so; and in the second place, his tact and good sense forbade it. He knew how at once curiously open and curiously exclusive is English aristocratic society. A man of any birth with good social abilities finds no difficulty in being admitted to the utmost freedom of intercourse: he is received with all the hospitality and courtesy of a stranger; but if he attempts to incorporate himself with the body, he is at once looked on as an interloper. He must be a man of either not very high spirit, or not very sensitive temperament, who attempts to gain a place in English society by marrying a woman in a station markedly above that in which he himself has been born and bred. Moore had too much penetration not to feel this. He chose to be independent in his choice; and a very happy lot he seems to have fallen upon. "Bessy" had a beauty which could charm the fastidious eye of Rogers, who seems to have taken to her greatly, and calls her the "Madonna della Sedia" and "Psyche." To much sweetness and softness of disposition she joined a sound judgment, and a self-control and power of endurance in emergencies which women of this constitution do not always command. She administered the supplies with infinite skill, and made Moore's home a retreat to which he could always turn from the world with perfect security for peace and happiness. Nor was he ungrateful or unregardful. Lord John Russell bears witness that, "from 1811, the year of his marriage, to 1852, the year of his death, this excellent and beautiful person received from him the homage of a lover, enhanced by all the gratitude, all the confidence, which the daily and hourly happiness he enjoyed were sure to inspire." His affections were as permanent as his emotions were transient. Indeed, all the depth that there was in his nature lay in the direction of his domestic affections. Through all the excitements and enjoyments of his London career he maintained the practice he had begun on first leaving home of writing twice a week to his mother, and a portion of all his literary gains through life was always liberally and most ungrudgingly devoted to enlarging the resources and increasing the comforts of not only his own but his wife's relations. No son ever repaid more fully or more freely the affection and care that had been spent on his early years. Nor did this conduct spring from the dictates of duty and conscious gratitude alone; his letters are full of proofs that he maintained unimpaired not only the habits, but all the freshness and spontaneous warmth of his early feelings. Perhaps this

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is nowhere more clearly shown than in the sensitiveness with which he shrinks from the slightest alarm of coldness on the part of those he loves. A month or two after his marriage he writes to his mother:

"It was but two days ago I got my dear father's letter about the letting of the house. If I thought for an instant that this resolution arose in any degree from any feeling of *hopelessness* or disappointment at my marriage, it would make me truly miserable; but I hope, and, indeed, am confident, dearest mother, that you do me the justice to be *quite* sure that this event has only drawn closer every dear tie by which I was bound to you; and that while my readiness to do every thing towards your comfort remains the same, my power of doing so will be, please God! much increased by the regularity and economy of the life I am entering upon. Indeed, *I may* be a little too alive to apprehension; but it struck me that there was rather a degree of coldness in the manner in which my dearest father's last letter mentioned my marriage; and if you knew how the cordiality and interest of all my friends has been tenfold increased since this event, you would not wonder, my darling mother, at the anxiety which I feel lest those, whom in this world I am chiefly anxious to please, should in the least degree withhold that full tribute to my conduct which my own conscience tells me I deserve, and which the warm sympathy of all my other friends has given such a happy and flattering sanction to; but I know I am (like *yourself*) too tremulously alive upon every subject connected with the affection of those I love, and I am sure my father by no means *meant* to speak coldly."

His genius and his heart stand in remarkable contrast. The one, with all its brilliancy, tact and effectiveness, is in truth superficial in its character, and strikes no deep root; while the restlessness of his temperament, his sensitiveness to passing emotions, his airy gaiety and cheerful spirits, are based on real depth of affectionateness and fidelity: and hence it came that, while he supported adverse fortune and struggled through limited means with unfailing courage and cheerfulness, the gradual loss by death of all who were most dear to him,—except his wife, of every relative that he had in the world,—shattered his health and overwhelmed his spirits. Early in life he anticipated such a result. Writing to Miss Godfrey, in 1810, after the death of his uncle, he says:

"I am so hourly prepared for these inroads on our social happiness, that the death of even the healthiest friend about me could scarcely, I think, take my heart by surprise; and the effect which such calamities are likely to have upon me will be seen more in the whole tenor of my life afterwards than in any violent or deep-felt grief of the moment: every succeeding loss will insensibly sink the level of my spirits, and give a darker and darker tinge to all my future hopes and

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feelings. This perhaps is the natural process which many a heart goes through that has to survive its dearest connections, though I rather think it is not the commonest way of feeling those events, but that, in general, the impression which they make is as *short* as it is keen and violent; and surely it is better to have one moment *darkly blotted*, with the chance of the next moment's washing it all out, than to possess that kind of sensibility which puts one's whole life into mourning."

In the latter part of 1811, under circumstances not very dissimilar to those which introduced him to Jeffrey, he made the acquaintance of Lord Byron. The details we have read in the *Life of Byron*. Again a duel miscarried, and again a dinner at Rogers's laid the first stone in a new friendship. The relation was rather that of close intimacy than of real friendship,—at least on Moore's side. Byron does not seem to have taken any very real hold on his affections. He was fascinated by the personal charm of his conversation and demeanour, and flattered by his intimacy with the genius who occupied so conspicuous a place in the world's eye. He liked him, and had a genuine admiration for him. Still Byron was an awkward friend for a man like Moore, as studiously solicitous of the world's good opinion as his friend was at once scornfully defiant and unduly ambitious of it. Moore was always trying to restrain his friend within those limits he so well knew himself. He had anxiously studied the exact range allowed by public opinion in England. He knew it was more tolerant of vice in practice than of error in opinion. He knew its love for a scapegoat, and was sorry to see Byron associating with one so distinguished in that capacity as Shelley. He had taken the measure of Leigh Hunt's social position, and pressingly dissuaded Lord Byron from connecting himself with him in the *Liberal*. Leigh Hunt, it is pretty clear, was not in every respect a very agreeable man to deal with; but he was certainly very ungenerously treated by Byron, and very unjustifiably libelled by Moore. He was not a man of the world; they both were, and used their advantage somewhat cruelly. Byron more than returned Moore's regard. He said he had but one friend, Lord Clare, "and perhaps Thomas Moore." Of those wild, clever letters he used to write from abroad, partly to amuse his friends at home and partly to amuse himself at their expense, the most natural and sincere in their tone are those addressed to Moore. Byron was always *gêné* by the society of mere literary people. He was suspicious of their claiming equality with him on the common ground of authorship, and forgetting he was a lord. Of this there was no danger with Moore; he was used to good company, and not the man to forget social distinctions—perhaps inclined to give them an undue value; but if there was any truth in his friend's unsparing observation, "Tommy dearly loves

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a lord," certainly no man ever gratified this taste with less sacrifice of independence than he did.

We find in the diary contained in these volumes some fresh details as to the suppression of those memoirs of himself which Byron wrote for publication after his death; but, on the whole, Lord John thinks it wiser to suppress the details of the suppression, and endeavours to console us by the assurance that the world is no loser by the burning of these memoirs. It may be so; still, the world would have preferred to judge for itself. The only good reason against their being published (with the necessary omissions) seems to have been that Sir John Cam Hobhouse had insuperable objections against it. Hobhouse had a taste for suppression. He advised against the publication of *Childe Harold;* he maintained that *Don Juan* could not be printed; he burned the memoirs, and he was opposed to the life being written at all.

Moore, though he seems to have acted against his real judgment, under a somewhat too fastidious fear of incurring unpleasant observations, played, at any rate, a thoroughly disinterested part in the matter. Lord Byron had given him the memoirs expressly that he might sell them for his own advantage. Moore assigned the Ms. to Murray, for 2000*l.*, in Byron's lifetime. On his death, when the question arose as to the propriety of publishing it at all, he insisted on refunding the money he had received, so as to regain his control over it; and then, against his own judgment, submitted to its being burnt unread by Lord Byron's nearest relatives, and declined every proposal on the part of his family to reimburse him. This is one of many instances of a marked and honourable trait in Moore's character. No pecuniary advantage had the slightest influence to bend him from any course which to his own ideas of honour or propriety seemed the true one. And his sense of propriety was nice, and his spirit of independence high. His Life of Lord Byron is a good one, and he steered his course with much tact through the difficulties with which his task was surrounded. In the main, and considering the author's position, the picture is a sufficiently impartial one. Flattered and softened it no doubt is, and those who wish to obtain a correct idea of Byron must seek additional sources of information.

In 1812 Moore began to be famous in a vein of satire much better adapted to his genius than the heavier style he had at first adventured on. His *Parody on the Prince's Letter* was a light but a very sharp arrow, well feathered with fun and its point anointed with a sort of good-humoured bitterness which gave it a great charm in the eyes of the Whigs, then in the first soreness of the Prince's desertion. "I never," he writes to his

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mother, "had such a *flattering* but embarrassing scene as yesterday. I dined at Lord Holland's, and there were the Duke of Bedford, Lord Grey, Lord Morpeth, &c. Their whole talk was about my poem, without having the least idea that I had written it: their praises, their curiosity about the author, their guesses, &c. would have been exceedingly amusing to me, if there had been *no one* by in the secret; but Lord Holland knew it, which made me a good deal puzzled how to act. Nothing for a long time has made such a noise." From this time forward his constant habit was to write similar little satires and *jeux-d'esprit* on the political points of the day, and publish them in one or other of the morning papers—a habit from which he derived no little emolument as well as amusement. No English writer has ever produced so many trifles of this kind of the same excellence. They are strictly things of the moment; and many of them are but laborious reading now, when the excitement of the hour and the absence of minute knowledge are wanting to give us the temper and the power to appreciate their full point. There are others, however, which, intimately bound up as they are with passing traits of personal character, turn upon more permanent sources of interest; and, as the author says in one of his prefaces, "their ridicule, thanks to the undying nature of human absurdity, appears to have lost as yet but little of the original freshness of its first application." Old political and social questions too are ever recurring, and every generation will find that some of the satires of a past one have been kept warm for it. Just now, for instance, "Sir Andrew Agnew" occupies as prominent a position on the stage as ever he did.

Sunday Ethics.

A SCOTCH ODE.

"Puir profligate Londoners, having heerd tell
That the De'il's got amang ye, and fearing 'tis true,
We ha' sent ye a mon wha's a match for his spell,
A chiel o' our ain, that the De'il himsel
Will be glad to keep clear of, one Andrew Agnew.

So, at least, ye may reckon, for ane day entire
In ilka lang week ye'll be tranquil eneugh,
As Auld Nick, do him justice, abhors a Scotch squire,
An' would sooner gae roast by his ain kitchen-fire
Than pass a hale Sunday wi' Andrew Agnew.

For, bless the gude mon, gin he had his own way,
He'd na let a cat on the Sabbath say 'mew;'
Nae birdie maun whistle, nae lambie maun play,
An' Phœbus himsel could na travel that day,
As he'd find a new Joshua in Andrew Agnew.

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Only hear, in your Senate, how awfu' he cries,
'Wae, wae to a' sinners who boil an' who stew!
Wae, wae to a' eaters o' Sabbath-bak'd pies;
For as surely again shall the crust thereof rise
In judgment against ye,' saith Andrew Agnew.

Ye may think, from a' this, that our Andie's the lad
To ca' o'er the coals your nobeelity too;
That their drives, o' a Sunday, wi' flunkies, a' clad
Like showmen, behind 'em, would mak the mon mad,—
But he's nae sic a noodle, our Andie Agnew.

If lairds an' fine ladies, on Sunday, think right
To gang to the deevil—as maist o' 'em do—
To stop them our Andie would think na polite;
And 'tis odds (if the chiel could get ony thing by't)
But he'd follow 'em, booing, would Andrew Agnew."

His earlier political squibs, including the *Twopenny Post-Boy*, though very personal, are much better than his later ones; they have a greater completeness about them; there is a main point which the minor strokes all go to enforce, while the later ones are apt to be loose, straggling, and uneven: a good point here and there with gaps between, and the whole wanting compression and a single aim.

In March 1812, writing to Miss Godfrey, he announces his intention to live in the country upon the earnings of his brains, and be as happy as love, literature, and liberty can make him. In accordance with this resolution, he soon after settled at Keyworth. His song-writing alone was a pretty good source of income, his musical publishers, the Powers, being under an engagement to pay him 500*l.* a year for his songs for seven years, and as much longer as he chose to say. Before the end of the year, his last hopes from Lord Moira were destroyed by the appointment of that nobleman as Governor-General of India, and the discovery by his *protégé* that, after so long a time of waiting for his patron's accession to power, it afforded him when at last attained no opportunity of serving the interests of his client. Lord Moira's shyness of the subject, and something of coldness in his tone, hurt Moore, and he shows some natural soreness on this point, as well as in the complete failure of expectations which had certainly been encouraged up to the very last; but he acted with his usual spirit, declined any offers of Lord Moira to use his interest for him with ministers at home, and somewhat pointedly freed Lord Moira himself from any future claim he might still be supposed to have upon him, as it was too late for him to *go on expecting*.

The publication of the *Twopenny Post-Boy* in the beginning of 1813, and the continued success of the Irish Melodies, had raised his name very high in the literary market.

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While writing these, however, his main occupation is with a long Eastern poem, on which "his whole heart and industry are at last fairly set," and in whose interests he declines an offer of Murray to instal him as editor of a new Review, like the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly*. As is always the case with him, it is for the public he is writing, and as a mere matter of business, not from any strong internal impulse. *Lalla Rookh* must be finished at once, "because, *anticipated* as I have already been in my Eastern subject by Lord Byron in his late poem, the success he has met with will produce a whole swarm of imitators in the same Eastern style, who will completely flyblow all the novelty of my subject." In the course of this year he moved to Mayfield Cottage, near Ashbourne, in Derbyshire, where he was nearer town, and out of the way of his fine friends at and in the neighbourhood of Donnington, who became expensive, as fine friends do. He doesn't find he avoids them here, however; he only exchanges the old ones for new ones. However, he works on, makes his *début* in the *Edinburgh* in a "castigation" of Lord Thurlow's poems, and before the end of the year he has concluded a negotiation with Longmans, by which they are to pay him 3000*l.* for his forthcoming poem without their having seen a line of it. It was not published, however, till early in 1817, and the intervening time Moore spent chiefly at home, relieved by a visit to Ireland and a visit from Rogers,—always a stanch and kind friend of his, and who, on this occasion, "was particularly amiable, and took no fright at the superfluity either of melted-butter or of maids, and even saw with composure a little boy who came to clean my shoes; not that I can quite answer for his subsequent reflections on these luxuries."

In the spring of that year he moved to Hornsey, to be at hand for the publication of *Lalla Rookh*. On the 13th May he writes to his mother that it is still unfinished; on the 30th he tells her it is already going into the second edition; and before the end of the year the sixth has been published. Like other poets and critics, he finds it easy to castigate Lord Thurlow, but can't see by what right, criticism, when directed towards his own productions, can assume to be otherwise than adulatory, especially when he is intimate with the reviewer. "Jeffrey's article," he says, "is pretty *fair*, though within an inch now and then of being otherwise." In the summer he paid a flying visit to Paris, where he picked up his materials for the *Fudges in Paris*, which, with its companion, the *Fudges in England*, are perhaps the two best specimens of his wit and fun. Soon after his return he suffered a grievous loss in the death of his daughter Barbara. Hitherto he had almost entirely escaped that class of afflictions, which to his sensitive and affectionate disposition came with a

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peculiar poignancy; henceforward his life was darkly chequered by them. Before the winter he made his last change of permanent residence, removing to a cottage at Sloperton, near Devizes. Here he was in the neighbourhood of Lord Lansdowne, whose library at Bowood was at his command, and from whom and Lady Lansdowne he and his wife always received the most kind and friendly attention. Another neighbour of his was Bowles, the author of those sonnets which Coleridge mentions as first awakening his love for poetry; the author too of those commentaries and pamphlets on Pope which elicited Byron's amazingly clever and absurd letters in vindication of that poet and assault on his commentators. Bowles was not that subdued man of tender sentiment the readers of his sonnets only may probably imagine him. He was an eccentric divine. Moore, who became a great friend of his, says of him, "What an odd fellow it is! and how narrowly by being a *genius* he has escaped being a *fool!* Even as it is, there seem to be some doubts among his brother magistrates." Again: "The mixture of talent and simplicity in him is delightful. His parsonage-house at Brenhill is beautifully situated; but he has a good deal frittered away its beauty with grottoes, hermitages, and Shenstonian inscriptions. When company is coming, he cries, 'Here, John, run with the crucifix and missal to the hermitage, and set the fountain going.' His sheep-bells are tuned in thirds and fifths: but he is an excellent fellow notwithstanding; and, if the waters of his inspiration be not those of Helicon, they are at least very sweet waters, and to my taste pleasanter than some that are more strongly impregnated."

At Sloperton his first business was to write the *Fudges in Paris*. It was while engaged in this work, in the spring of 1818, that he received the unpleasant and—to a man in his position of less cheerful and courageous temper—almost overwhelming intelligence, that his deputy in Barbadoes had embezzled the proceeds of the sale of a ship and cargo, which had been deposited in his hands during an appeal to the Court in England; and that he, as registrar, was held responsible for the loss of a sum amounting to something like 6000*l.* The unfortunate poet sees before him the prospect of the King's Bench; but, though feeling the blow, he is far from being utterly cast down by it. He says, in one of his letters, "They cannot take from me either my self-respect or my talents, and I can live upon them happily *any where*." "It is well," said one of his friends, "you are a poet; a philosopher never could have borne it." The matter, however, remained some time pending in the Admiralty Courts. Meanwhile the *Fudges* prosper amazingly—five editions in less than a fortnight—and have already put 350*l.* in his pocket. He now undertook to write his life of Sheridan;

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and a good deal of his time henceforth is occupied in seeking materials in every possible quarter. Among others he visits Dr. Parr, of whom he gives a lively picture in his diary, and the most pointed anecdote about whom is that of his "cutting the throat of his first wife's picture one day, when she irritated him very much by destroying his favourite cat." It was not until July of the next year that a legal judgment actually passed against him in the Bermuda affair, and an attachment was on the point of being issued against his person. His friends were most anxious to come to his assistance: Leigh Hunt will sell his piano to begin a subscription; Rogers has 500*l.* at his service; Lord Lansdowne volunteers to become his security; Lord Tavistock is very poor, but would willingly sacrifice something to be of use to him; Lord John offers the future editions of his *Life of Lord Russell*. Moore declines these and all other offers: Longmans are willing to advance him any sum necessary on the mortgage of his future industry, and on his industry and abilities alone he resolutely decides to rely. Meanwhile, after some irresolution in his choice of a retreat, he decides to take refuge in Paris, in the hopes of forcing his opponents to some compromise. Accordingly, in September he left England in company with Lord John Russell, whom he proposed to accompany in a tour to Italy.

During their short stay in Paris, the most amusing thing he saw was Suard's tomb at Père la Chaise. "At the bottom of the inscription over him is, *Il attend son amie;* somebody wrote, *Qu'il attende.*" Further we learn little of importance. He eats ices, sees pictures, dines, and goes to the play or the opera. This is characteristic of him, he always goes to the theatre wherever he is; he was a man who even in London could *habitually* go to the theatre, and sup after it; he could continue doing that; he did it at the age of forty,—when Bessy came up from Wiltshire for one day, to take a last farewell before he went abroad, he took her to Astley's to see "the high-mettled racer;" and all the time he is abroad, wherever there is an opera or a stage of any kind, he makes a point of visiting it. He is not at all select in his taste in such matters. On one occasion, Bessy and he took "dear Anastasia to the theatre of M. Comte, where we saw an extraordinary old man eat whole walnuts, and a crawfish, and a bird, and an eel, all alive."

His journey over the Alps he seems to have enjoyed greatly. The ordinary aspects of natural scenery had little attraction for him; but the novelty and magnificence of the great sights to which he was now introduced produced a strong, though passing effect on his impressible nature. You see men of this sort: they are like a jelly; they tremble all over at what would little

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move most people, and yet receive no permanent impressions. It is only when the scene is before him, or yet perfectly fresh in his memory, that he can do it justice; and his prose descriptions of the moment are infinitely superior to his poetical reproductions. For the latter he preferred, he candidly tells us, to rely on the impressions of others. He always *read* up for his poetry; but his brief prose memoranda, written while the excitement is yet fresh, are remarkable for the vividness with which they convey the character of the scene and the emotions it was calculated to stir. On one occasion, returning from a visit to Ferney, he

"Saw Mont Blanc, with its attendant mountains, in the fullest glory, the rosy light shed on them by the setting sun, and their peaks rising so brightly behind the dark rocks in front, as if they belonged to some better world, or as if Astræa was just then leaving the glory of her last footsteps on their summits: nothing was ever so grand and beautiful."

Again:

"27th. Arrived at Brieg, at the foot of the Simplon; an oriental-looking little place, with its spires and towers. Ascended the Simplon, which baffles all description. A road, carried up into the very clouds, over torrents and precipices; nothing was ever like it. At the last stage, before we reached the barrier on the summit, walked on by myself, and saw such a scene by sunset as I shall never forget. That mighty panorama of the Alps, whose summits there, indistinctly seen, looked like the top of gigantic waves, following close upon each other; the soft lights falling on those green spots which cultivation has conjured up in the midst of this wild scene; the pointed top of the Jungfrau, whose snows were then pink with the setting sun;—all was magnificent to a degree that quite overpowered me, and I alternately shuddered and shed tears as I looked upon it. Just, too, as we arrived near the snows on the very summit the moon rose beautifully over them, and gave a new sort of glory to the scene."

Of his visit to Byron at Venice he has given an account in the Life; and his diary furnishes no additional details worth noting, unless it be a very direct expression on the part of Byron of the opinion he really seems to have held as to Shakespeare. "What do you think of Shakespeare, Moore? I think him a damned humbug." From Venice he went to Rome, where he is characteristically enraptured with Canova and Chantrey, and sits to Bartolini for his bust; thence he passed to Florence and elsewhere, and returned to Paris before the end of the year. As there seemed no chance of his Bermuda business being settled, he sent for Bessy and his children, and went to meet them at Calais—a piece of conjugal attention which he is told disgusts all Paris.

Moore, of course, saw a great many pictures in Italy. He

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took little interest in them at first: really good pictures require an active imagination to enjoy them. He, as usual, is passive; but where there is obvious sentiment to rouse his feelings his admiration is at once engaged.

"Went to the Brera: some fine pictures; particularly one by Guercino, of Abraham and Agar; by far the most striking picture I ever saw. Never did any woman cry more beautifully than Agar, and the hope that lingers still amidst her sorrow is deeply affecting; in short, it attains the *si vis me flere* effectually, and brought the tears into my eyes as I looked at it."

Elsewhere he says:

"To a real lover of nature, the sight of a pretty woman, or a fine prospect, is beyond the best painted pictures of them in the world. Give, however, the due admiration to the *chefs-d'œuvre* of art, of Guido, Titian, Guercino."

Not to question his selection of the three greatest painters, what would he have thought of one who should say, that to a real lover of nature the warbling of a thrush, or the babbling of a running brook, is preferable to the most consummate productions of the greatest composers? He would have said, justly enough, such a one had no power of appreciating music; and this was his own case in painting. But though with no insight into the art, he liked to learn about it, as he did about most things. He begins by speaking with contempt of connoisseurs in painting, and ends in becoming a most determined one himself. He is always very honest about his opinions, however, and never affects to admire either Raphael or Michael Angelo. He says, the "Last Judgment" of the latter is "a strange jumble to be called sublime."

Having settled down in Paris for the winter, he occupied himself with a set of poems originally intended to form part of a "Fudge Family in Italy;" but on consideration, and in the lack of sufficiently good spirits, he gave up the comic part; and at a later time the detached fragments were published under the title of *Rhymes on the Road*. Among them are some of his best lines. He commenced, too, an Egyptian poem, which was afterwards exchanged for the prose story of *The Epicurean*, and now appears in an unfinished form appended to that story. By degrees, however, his engagements absorbed his energies, and his whole time appears to have become devoted to a round of genuine Parisian gaiety. One day goes the same way as another: he goes to fêtes, balloon-ascents, fireworks, down the cars at the Beaujou, *any* where; he dines with some of his legion of acquaintance, or makes up a party for Beauvilliers or the Rochez de Cancalle, and spends the evening at the Opera, the Français, the Gymnase, or

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the Variétés,—even at the Porte St. Martin, to see Madlle. Bégrand in Suzanna; then ice at Tortoni's, or supper and brandy-and-water, according to the season and the company; and so to bed at two in the morning. In the autumn of 1821, he ventured to England disguised by a pair of moustachios, and while there had the satisfaction of finding his Bermuda business settled, and that the amount he had to pay was reduced to 740*l.* In November he returned to his old life at Paris; but seems to have got a little more writing done. One day he even had time to moralise: "7th. Dined by myself at the Trois Frères, and found great pleasure in the few moments of silent repose it gave me. Never did I lead such an unquiet life: Bessy ill, my house uncomfortable, anxious to employ myself in the midst of distractions, and full of remorse in the utmost of my gaiety."

In June 1822, after returning from a short visit to England, he begins a poem called the *Three Angels*, afterwards published as the *Loves of the Angels*, which he has finished before his final return to England in November. He concludes his Paris residence in character, with a dinner given him by his Irish friends there, at which, if we may judge of them by the snatches he reports in his diary, he made some very ornamental and indifferent speeches. In December the *Angels* appear, and Tom Moore is astonished to find that a British public, which could swallow *Little's Poems* by an effort, ascribes blasphemy to a work which he flattered himself was the most moral of all his productions, and that there is a vast deal of mournful head-shaking over it. The wretched author, who would not for the world touch the sensitive theological antennæ of the British public, is all dismay. However, the book sells, which is the main thing, and in revising for the fifth edition, a happy thought strikes him. He proposes to Longmans to "make the 'angels' completely *Eastern*, and thus get rid of that connection with the Scriptures which they fear will in the longrun be a drag on the popularity of the poem." The Longmans say, "Your idea is the very thing;" and the next entry in the diary begins somewhat dolefully. "Turned over my *D'Herbelot*, &c., for the project of turning the poor *Angels* into 'Turks.'" Lord Lansdowne thinks this a false step, as an avowal that the first plan was wrong; but Longmans,—and they know best,—press for the alteration, and maintain that it will materially serve the author and his future works with the public. So poor Moore gets together Prideaux's *Life of Mahomet*, and Beausobre's *Manicheism*, and Hyde's *Religio Persarum*, and *Philojudæus*, and Martin's *Travels*, and sets to work at notes to unscripturalise these loving angels of his,—on whom one of his Dublin readers passes so wicked a criticism. "I could not help figuring to myself," says Kyle, the Provost, "all the while

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I was reading it, Tom, Jerry, and Logic, *on a lark from the sky.*"

In May 1823 he published his *Fables of the Holy Alliance*, being assured that, though they might expose him to prosecution, no jury would convict. Denman advises that

> "The plaintiff will be hissed;
> My lords the judges laugh, and you're dismissed."

So much safer is it in England to libel the Government than to offend Exeter Hall. In the summer he went a tour in Ireland with Lord Lansdowne, and spent the next winter and spring partly in town and partly at Sloperton, always restlessly running about, and busy with Sheridan's Life, various songs, and the *Life of Captain Rock*, a work for which his late visit in Ireland helped to furnish the materials.

This book he published in April 1824. It is an historical *résumé* of the misgovernment of Ireland, with a more detailed attack on the Irish Church and the system of tithes. It met with considerable success, more perhaps than it really deserved. Moore's is not a kind of pleasantry that easily allies itself with serious subjects. Sydney Smith's humour comes as a strong enforcer of his arguments. Moore's wit is like a varnish spread over the dryness of his details, or like sugar given with medicine to make it go down. It gives an air of levity, instead of being, as humour often is, only another form of earnestness. The attempt to write in the assumed character of Captain Rock is very raggedly and flimsily maintained, and altogether the work can claim to be little more than a clever selection of one-sided facts. It is one of those books which, as you read it with a temper willing enough to be convinced, suggests at every turn how much there must be to be said on the other side, and what evident pains are taken to keep it out of sight. The book, however, no doubt did good service by attracting a wide public attention to the anomalous position and unjust exactions of the Irish Church, with which it dealt well and forcibly. In May came the intelligence of Lord Byron's death, and the grand *fracas* about his memoirs, which seems to have absorbed Moore too much to leave much room for regret at the loss of his friend. In October 1825 he published the *Life of Sheridan*, which had so long been occupying his attention. The task was one for which in many respects he was well suited. His biographies are industriously-collected and well-told bodies of fact; but he has not the power of conveying any very vivid idea of the personality of his subject, and the filagree of his fancy is often very much out of place. His was a mind formed to deal with facts not connected by principles, but by the motives and characters of living men; and few

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writers could be better adapted for an historian of that part of political history which deals with the struggles and life of a party. He seems, however, to have been little capable of balancing large and complicated bodies of evidence, or of dealing with a wide range of intricate fact. He had no claim to wisdom or sagacity, but he could form a sound opinion on political affairs, and an opinion of his own; and in his *Life of Sheridan* he did not scruple to put forward some views not quite in harmony with the idolatry of Fox, indulged by his great Whig friends.

The current of his life henceforward presents little or no change. When you have read in his diary how he spent his time in the first few years after his marriage, you have learned how he spent it all the rest of his life, till he gradually retired from the world altogether. There is no binding element in his existence. It is a rope of sand, made up of the petty engagements of the day. He has no objects in life but to provide for its continuance, and to enjoy it as it goes. There is no continuity in his mind either. He is never establishing any truths, making any permanent deductions from his experience. He always seems to begin the day just where he was yesterday—his mind is the same at five-and-twenty and at sixty. He never seems, even in his literary labours, to feel the least real interest in his subject. He is absorbed in thinking how he shall do it so as to get the most praise and money. It is the very spirit of the schoolboy, who gets up his Tacitus and Sophocles for the sake of a high place in his class, and has no idea that they deserve to be studied for their own sake. His diary is only worth reading all through to give you a thorough idea of the self-occupation, the restlessness, and the incessant pursuit of small excitements, which distinguish the writer; and to say that it is worth perusing on this account, is to presuppose that you are willing to make some effort to gain a vivid idea of Tom Moore's frivolity. Its pages are filled throughout with the same eternal round of personal engagements, lists of people he saw or dined with, little disconnected scraps of conversation; containing some bit of information that struck him, or some oddity that made him laugh—many of them curious and amusing enough. But there is no colour in the thing; he never reproduces the people and the scenes among which he is living. The least interesting and most wearisome reading of all forms of narrative is that which is at once minute and naked, which tells you every incident without any of that fulness of surrounding circumstance which alone can give it life. This style a diary almost necessarily assumes; the fact of the day, that you walked in the fields, that Lord Lansdowne called, or that you had cutlets for dinner, seems at the time (at least it

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did so to Moore) sufficiently important to be noted in your diary: it is not, however, important enough to dwell upon, and a habit is contracted of noting every thing down in a brief skeleton form, especially as writing a diary soon becomes a bore, and as the times when you are really engaged in matters of importance are just those when you have least leisure to give an account of them. The diary of a man of thought, who uses it as a memorandum-book of what passes in his mind, or the diary of a man in important action, which forms a framework that may be filled up from other sources, and gives clues in various directions to the actions of others,—these may be valuable; but the diary of a literary man, who doesn't think, can rarely be worth keeping, and that of a diner-out still less so. Not but that each of them may have valuable experiences to record; but that day after day can scarcely demand an historical record of its own. Let such men write their own memoirs, by all means; but we implore them not to keep diaries. Somebody will insist on publishing them whole, and a discontented generation will have to read them. Gray kept a daily record of the weather. We wonder it has never been published as a contribution to his life.

The incessant allusions in Moore's diary to the effect of his works and of his singing, the anxious collection of every little tribute to his success,—have been said to be evidence, not so much of vanity as of a humility which required these supports. They spring really from the fact that what he did had no value of its own to him. He measured every thing simply by its power of commanding this sort of applause. He was not one of those men who, having work to do, do it, and pass their own judgment on what they have done; who use the opinions of others only as correctives of their own; who smile when they are unjustly condemned, and feel uneasy when they are unjustly praised. Moore lived on the favouring breath of his readers. A credit at Longmans and the applause of the coteries were the alpha and omega of his literary ambition. But though he had little or none of the artist's love of his work, or pride in it for its own sake, his temper as a man required that the sort of applause he courted should be such as the world esteemed best worth having, and that the pay should come from quarters that ranked highest in social standing. In his later years, while occupied with the uncongenial and burdensome *History of Ireland*, on which he exhausted the energies of his last working-days, we find him refusing offers of employment much better adapted to the natural rank and order of his genius, but which he declined as derogatory to his social and literary standing. He was offered 500*l.* —700*l.* a year to edit the *Keepsake*—1,000*l.* a year to write it all, 100*l.* for a hundred lines, 600*l.* for 120 pages. No, he would

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none of it. "The fact is," he says, "it is my *name* brings these offers; and my name would suffer by accepting them." It is with difficulty he was induced to accept (and he limited his acceptance to one year) Captain Marryat's munificent offer of 500*l.* a year for contributions to the *Metropolitan* just so often as it might suit him to give them, stipulating only for something in each of the three next numbers. Though writing was purely a profession to him, he never at any time grasped at gain, or balanced between large profits and a high and unblemished reputation. He had always, moreover, a pleasure in executing his work well, and a very conscientious anxiety to justify confidence reposed in his powers.

On the occasion of his father's death, in December 1825, he was again called on to exercise his self-denying independence.

"Forgot to say that, the night before last, I received a letter from Crampton, enclosing one from Shaw (the Lord-Lieutenant's secretary), the purport of which was that the Lord-Lieutenant meant to continue my father's half-pay in the shape of a pension to my sister. Resolved, of course, to decline this favour; but wrote a letter full of thankfulness to Crampton. Find since that this was done at Crampton's suggestion; that Lord Wellesley spoke of the difficulty there was in the way, from the feelings the king most naturally entertained towards me, and from himself being the personal friend of the king; but that, on further consideration, he saw he could do it without any reference to the other side of the Channel, and out of the pension-fund placed at his disposal as Lord-Lieutenant. All this is very kind and liberal of Lord Wellesley, and God knows how useful such an aid would have been to me, as God alone knows how I am to support all the burdens now heaped upon me; but I could not accept such a favour. It would be like that lasso with which they catch wild animals in South America; the noose would be only on the tip of the horn, it is true; but it would do."

This was a real sacrifice; for, in consequence partly of the assistance rendered by him to his mother and sister, he seems during this year to have been in considerable difficulties about money-matters. It is characteristic of the value of his name, and the confidence reposed in him, that it was always easy for him to obtain money on a mortgage of his future abilities; both the *Times* and the *Chronicle* were willing to make him an advance, to be written out in squibs, and the proprietors of Covent Garden lent him 400*l.*, on the conditions that he should write them a play within twelve months or return the money with interest. He preferred the latter alternative, and provided funds chiefly by writing *jeux-d'esprit* for the *Times*, whose proprietors advanced him 500*l.*, and offered him 400*l.* a-year for sending them just so many of these poems as his fancy and inclination might prompt him to write. At the same time he was busy with his

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prose story of *The Epicurean*, and negotiating with Murray about a life of Lord Byron. Murray is very difficult to deal with, and does not know his own mind about the matter; at one time he engages Moore to write the life, at another determines to publish Byron's papers by themselves; then decides they are private and cannot be published in his lifetime, and must be left as a legacy to his children; and ultimately hands them all over to Moore, and gives him 4000 guineas to make the most of them. In all his dealings with Moore Mr. Murray fully justifies an expression of Byron's, who called him "the most nervous of God's booksellers." He repeatedly urged to Moore that Byron's life was "his birthright." It must be a very well-established publisher who can get it into his head that he was born with a vested interest in the history of another man's life. The Longmans' mode of dealing stands in remarkable contrast to Mr. Murray's constant anxiety to secure a good pennyworth. All their transactions with Moore, from the very beginning down to this present time,—when they have given, as Lord John informs us, 3000*l.* for the diary edited by him,—seem to have been marked by a liberality amounting to generosity, and a most friendly and delicate consideration for Moore's interests. Moore ought scarcely to have written his witty little poem describing the publishers dining off the authors; he himself certainly ate his full share of the dish made out of his brains. The lions of Paternoster Row don't make the statues; perhaps, however, they like as well to keep quiet about it, and prefer to "praise God, and make no boast."

In June 1827 *The Epicurean* was published. It had considerable success, though not so much as his poems. The research he expended on this work is something wonderful; and there is no doubt that all the particulars of his description are strictly in accordance with what somebody else has said some time ago: the longer ago the better. This does not mean that he has seized the spirit of the time, or reproduced the life and thought of Christian and Heathen Egypt in the second century; only that he rummaged an immense number of books to pick up any thing he could find to serve as materials for his fancy to work upon. The only thing he really wished to be correct in was external scenery and costume; as for the rest, there is nothing in Alciphron to prevent his being a sentimental modern man of fashion. Alethe would have found her place at least as well in a Puseyite convent as in the Pyramids; and the two had fled with as much propriety to Scotland as up the Nile. The story hangs on the slightest possible thread of incident; the *dramatis personæ* have no life-likeness or substantive character about them; but the whole owes its charm to the gorgeous tints spread over the externals;

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the fancy is perpetually employed in reconstructing for us scenes of splendour and startling novelty. The broad Nile glitters in the sun, starred with the green islands; boats flit here and there, the stately temples are laid open, lamps shine, music echoes in our ears, dancing forms, lovely faces bewilder our eyes; we think we are at the opera-house, and the *ballet* is divine. Never was a *spectacle* got up with more skill or with a more lavish expenditure of materials. Alethe and Alciphron in a *pas-de-deux*, emblematic of the power of love and the Christian religion, display a grace and tenderness that moves the hearts of all spectators. There is enjoyment of a certain sort in reading of this kind, something like that we have in seeing good fireworks; but as inferior to the pleasure real poetry gives as fireworks are

> "To sight of vernal bloom, or summer's rose,
> Or flocks, or herds, or human face divine."

In our first youth, indeed, when the imagination is awakening, and the intellect and the feelings at once keenly alive and undisciplined and uninformed by realities, this sort of stimulant to the fancy seems delightful; we devour it with absorbing interest, the artificiality does not spoil the sentiment, we don't see the poverty that all this glitter enwraps. At that age we don't care about our heroes and heroines being true to the complex realities of human beings; enough for us if the women are incarnations of loveliness, and the men paragons in courage and intellect. Moore's is the *vin mousseux* of poetry; adolescents and some women drink it with pleasure; men prefer something with more body and real flavour.

In 1830 he published his *Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald*, which was another work not altogether palatable to Holland House; but about this Moore does not very much concern himself; he has begun to doubt whether the Whigs are much better than their opponents. He thinks they have as much party spirit, and are less able to bear the elation of place. He has a private pique, too, against them. In England, when any person high in rank or power shows personal kindness to a literary man, such kindness is looked on less as a favour in itself than as the foundation for a claim to receive an official appointment. It is unfortunate; but so it is, however; and even Moore, with all his independence of feeling, does not escape the universal impression that, because he has been hospitably treated, something ought to be "done for him." He is disappointed that Lord Lansdowne does not think of him; and this temper of his breaks out in some very caustic observations on the Whig tendencies to conciliate opponents rather than reward friends.

On the question of Reform, too, Moore differed from the

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Whigs. He said that he agreed with the Whigs as to the *principle* of the measure, and with the Tories in their opinion as to its consequences. Lord John, of course, inserts a note containing a list of measures which his party are accustomed to take the credit of, and holding up to admiration "the wisdom and patriotism of our reformed Parliaments." Moore was certainly wrong as to the calmness with which the country would receive and work the new measure; he and the Tories were not wrong as to the necessary development of the false principle of simple numerical representation, for the adoption of which the short-sighted and unskilful concoctors of the bill itself are responsible. But, except so far as Ireland was concerned, Moore did not take any very deep interest in politics; he discussed them as one living familiarly with some of the chief actors could not help doing, but he did not venture into the arena. He seems, indeed, at one time, to have had thoughts of taking an active part in the Irish questions of the day; but was deterred, partly by the overshadowing influence of O'Connell, whose whole course, in spite of some personal regard, he always regarded with aversion and disapprobation, and partly because he was prevented by the exigencies of earning a livelihood.

He had a real affection for his country, and took, in general, temperate and sensible views of her political position and requirements. His patriotic songs had done much to excite sympathy for her cause, and won him a very high place in the warm hearts of his countrymen, from which even his courageous attack on O'Connell in one of his songs did not displace him. On the occasion of his visit to Ireland in the years 1830 and 1835, he was welcomed with the most unbounded enthusiasm. "Show your Irish face, Tom," they cried at the theatre, "you needn't be ashamed of it;" and welcomed it when it appeared with storms of acclamation.

His *Travels of an Irish Gentleman in Search of a Religion*, which he produced about this time, is written more under an Irish inspiration than a Catholic one. It is a defence of the Catholic religion, hedging the controversy between it and Protestantism within very narrow limits, and conducting it within these limits on a very narrow basis. There are two ways of arguing all questions: one is, to attempt to grasp in its fulness the real case of your adversary, to pierce to the real ground on which he supports his convictions, to find the elements of truth which are embraced in it, and to follow the edge of that delicate boundary along which it melts into error,—this is the mode which a powerful mind, with strong convictions of its own, and a desire to convince minds of another class, will naturally pursue. The

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other course is, to direct exclusive attention to what seem the weakest points of an adversary's case; to batter away at these; to strip away the finer suggestions of words, and insist on holding them to their naked grammatical meaning, uninfluenced by the tone of the connection and the character of the writer's mind; to snatch at small advantages; to appeal to the prejudices of your own party instead of the candour of the other; in short, to harass the suburbs, instead of compelling a surrender by parallels and regular approaches. The *Travels of an Irish Gentleman in Search of a Religion* is an instance of the latter mode of argument. It is a laborious array of what the writer thinks the weak points of Protestantism, among which the facts that Luther drank beer and thought he saw the devil hold a prominent place. It is an array of citations to show that the early Fathers believed in the Real Presence; an attempt to impugn the principle of private judgment by enumerating the various sects into which Protestantism has branched; and by setting up the results of German investigation as a bugbear to frighten us from an open perusal of the Bible. It is curious how easily Moore adapts himself to the close air of the Catholic Church. The book is weak, nay, often destructive to the cause he advocates; for he uses the argument of the moment, without any regard to its ultimate tendencies. Dr. Doyle perceived this when he said, in praising the book, that "if St. Augustine were made less heretical, and Scratchenback (the German professor) less plausible, the work is one of which any of us might be proud." It is not always safe to prove your proposition by a *reductio ad theologiam Germanicam*. Moore was annoyed that he should be identified with his hero; while at the same time he says he does firmly believe all that he has said in his book of the superiority of the Roman Catholic religion over the Protestant in point of antiquity, authority, and consistency. That is, he thought the early Fathers more Catholic than Protestant. Perhaps he perceived that this point might be granted without any very fatal consequences to the common principles of Protestant churches. He was not in his book arguing out his own convictions; he was only striking a blow, with an Irishman's natural irritation, at the Established Church in Ireland. Whatever faith he thought himself bound to profess and defend, his real conclusions as to the relative advantages of the two churches are evident enough from several expressions he lets fall. We may cite, in particular, one memorandum which occurs in his diary of a conversation with his sister after their father's death:

"Our conversation naturally turned upon religion; and my sister Kate, who, the last time I saw her, was more than half-inclined to de-

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clare herself a Protestant, told me she had since taken my advice and remained quietly a Catholic. . . . For myself, my having married a Protestant wife gave me an opportunity of choosing a religion, at least for my children; and if my marriage had no other advantage, I should think *this* quite sufficient to be grateful for."

His motive for continuing a professed member of one religion with this strong view of the real superiority of another, was probably in great measure because he felt the Irish cause to be bound up so intimately with Catholicism, that a renunciation of the latter would be damaging to the interests of the former, and would be felt as a desertion by his countrymen.

In 1835 his friend Lord John Russell procured him a pension of 300*l.* It is true that it is not easy to adapt literary pensions to the most deserving claims of literary men, and that a man of the highest genius is more likely to escape observation than one of more moderate and popular abilities, while the latter is also sure of the opportunity of providing for himself; still the difficulty of rewarding the highest class of service seems to be no good argument against rewarding that which, though less high, is of the same class, and no one will be disposed to grudge the author of the *Irish Melodies* this small draft upon the resources of the country. The self-denying Bessy, on hearing of it, says: "N.B. If this good news be true, it will make a great difference in my *eating*. I shall then indulge in butter to potatoes." Poor Bessy, one cannot help thinking a little sadly of the many lonely hours she spent in their little Wiltshire hermitage, while her husband's business or amusements detained him in London or elsewhere. He loved her, no doubt, most sincerely, and was even capable of renouncing pleasures when they came into direct collision with her comforts; still he was evidently one of those people who almost unconsciously give great opportunities for small self-sacrifices to those who live with them, and Bessy was one to avail herself to the utmost of these opportunities. She bore a little too much of the burden and heat of the day (we don't like to hear of her being always sent down before on arrivals, and left behind on partings to do packing and unpacking); and in those sad trials to which they were exposed in common, something too much of the effort necessary to the sustainment both of the sufferer and the survivors comes from her. A man of Moore's keen sensibilities suffers so much more acutely than another, that it is not fair to charge him with want of fortitude because he shrinks from that which a man of blunter susceptibilities can bear unmoved. Still, where the feelings for others are deep in proportion to the sensibility, they can nerve the frame for any degree of

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self-sacrifice. Moore, however, was rather one of those who dread the sufferings of others because they react on themselves than of those who willingly share anguish for the mere hope of helping to console it, and the severest pang in whose own sufferings arises from the thought that those they love must suffer in seeing them suffer. Moore used to say women *felt* less than men. We doubt if the reverse be not true; the superior delicacy of their organisation would seem to indicate it. Moore said they could hold hot kettles longer. This may have only proved that they did not drop them for the same degree of pain. A better proof would have been to ascertain whose hand was sooner burned.

When Moore heard of Sir Walter Scott's downfall, he said, "I almost regret, indeed, having been brought so close to Scott, as I might otherwise have been saved the deep and painful sympathy I now feel for his misfortune:" and he has himself given a heart-rending description of the last moments of his daughter Anastasia, when he had not courage to remain by her side, but could only bear to visit her for a few seconds, and the mother bent down between them to save the father from the pain of seeing the face of his dying child. Anastasia was their last surviving daughter, and before long death deprived them of their two sons. Though unable to afford them a college education, he had allowed them both to take up the expensive and unremunerative profession of arms. But he was a solicitous if not always a judicious father, and made considerable exertions to forward his sons' interests in the life they had chosen. They both went to India. Russell, who was in the Company's service, returned home after a year's stay at Calcutta to die of decline in his mother's arms; and Tom, who seems to have inherited his father's temperament without his vigour and habits of industry, got into debt, and sold his commission to extricate himself. The opportunity was given to his father to retrieve this false step, and to obtain him a good place in a regiment in England; but the sum of 400*l.* was required, and this he seems to have found it impossible to command. He was fully occupied with the unfortunate *Irish History*, the most laborious work of his life, which paid him so ill both in money and reputation; the previous drafts upon him for his sons' outfits, &c. had anticipated all his resources; and he allowed what we cannot help feeling a false pride to prevent him from obtaining an advance from his many friends. It seems strange, that when he permitted himself to do this in a much less serious case of his own, he should have hesitated when his son's whole prospects for life were at stake. But he was sixty-three, and worn with his recent hard work and trou-

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bles, and he seems to have succumbed to a sense of hopelessness. Tom went to Paris, and became bent on entering the Légion Etrangère in Algiers: Madame Adelaide's regard for his father enabled him to accomplish his wishes; but the service, which involved the highest degree of privation and exposure, soon proved fatal to him. Delicate in constitution, and enfeebled by previous illness, he had for a long time to sleep on the stones of the court-gateway, exposed to the African night-dews and the chance shots of the Arabs. "About the middle of March," writes Moore, "we received a strange and anxious-looking letter, which we opened with trembling hands, and it told us that my son Tom was dead!" His sister Ellen, to whom he was tenderly attached, had died only the month before. His brother and his other sister were both gone. Tom was the last of his five children. "We are left," he says, "desolate and alone." Wearily he dragged through the last pages of his *History*; but under the last straw, the preface, his strength broke down. "In vain did I try for two or three days to satisfy myself with a few prefatory sentences; but they would not come as I wished; and at last, in utter despair, I left to the Longmans to finish the abortive preface." A dangerous illness overtook him, from which he arose changed, shaken in body, and enfeebled in mind and memory. He still sometimes haunted the tables to whose gaiety he had once so largely ministered, and where now his silent and shattered form suggested only sadness and pity. Soon the seclusion of Sloperton closed over him. He died on the 26th of February 1852; and it is with a welcome sense of relief from the melancholy impression left by the picture of his last appearance in society that we learn from his editor that "his last days were peaceful and happy: his domestic sorrows, his literary triumphs, seem to have faded away alike into a calm repose. He retained to his last moments a pious submission to God, and a grateful sense of the kindness of her whose tender office it was to watch over his decline." Hers is a sad survivorship.

Moore wittily said that some men discount their reputation, and spend it all in their lifetime. It was eminently his own case. His popularity as a poet was a corollary from his skill in adapting words and music to one another, and from his great success in society. The difficulty is to get people to read poetry at all; once get them to read with a preconviction of the excellence of what they are engaged upon, and it is astonishing how easy it is to excite enthusiasm, and how perseveringly readers will drain the very dregs of a popular author. The fact is, there is as much excellence in average poetry as average readers are

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capable of appreciating; and it needs the fining-off process of two or three generations before the convictions of competent judges begin to tell. There are people with strong convictions about Moore; but they are not numerous. Lord John is one. He thinks the poets of the early part of this century are—first, Byron; second, Scott; third, Moore. One doesn't contradict an assertion of this sort. One smiles at it. It is a harmless and limited Whig tradition. It is a belief preserved from the days when these men were living, and when a man might have held such an opinion without any serious impugnment of his judgment or taste. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Shelley, even Crabbe, were introducing features so new into the poetry of their time, that it was no wonder they were slow to gain admirers. They were raising poetic insight to its long-lost place at the head of all the varied endowments that must meet in the poet. But in those high social circles in which Moore and Rogers moved, and which represented, not indeed the genius, but the most polished tastes and cultivated understandings in the nation, quite a different test of excellence prevailed. Masterly execution was there accounted the highest merit. The chief pleasure they derived from poetry was in contemplating the skill of the artist in selection and arrangement of language, and in giving at once smoothness and diversity to his rhythm. Byron, in his headstrong way, boldly maintains that execution is the sole test of a poet. Lord Holland thought hours were well spent in putting a polish on an epigram. Rogers esteemed Crabbe's "Library" higher than his "Tales." The men who held these opinions were not insensible to the higher beauties of poetry; but it was to finish and ornament they devoted their conscious attention. Moore pleased these higher critics among whom he lived, by the polish and point of his verses. He pleased the multitude, and he pleases many still (and not altogether without reason), by the brightness of his imagery and the richness of his ornamentation. He belongs to the decorative school. His imagery is bright; but it has none of that freshness and force which distinguish the poet who interprets to others through the living aspects of nature, which have been interpreters to him. Moore is always in an artificial world of poesy distinct from the real ever new world in which we live. He systematically and avowedly preferred to get his poetical materials at second hand. He uses the things which he finds other men have used; he polishes them and dresses them up with infinite skill; he turns them, refaces them, divides them, and recombines them with a fancy whose resources seem inexhaustible.

The most obvious characteristic of his poetry is its superficiality. This accounts both for its sudden popularity and its

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rapid neglect. Its surface is highly attractive; but it yields all its charms to the first glance. The more you read it, the less you like it. When the poet is greater than his reader; when the depth or the subtlety of his thought can scarcely find expression in words, and yet the expression he seizes does in some way convey the thought there,—then to a casual perusal the words often yield nothing; one man comes and "can't see any thing in it;" but another reads and reads again and again, and finds it an inexhaustible mine of beauty and interest; and the very labour and attention, the excitement of his whole poetic nature, that has been required to pierce to the full meaning, is in itself a high enjoyment. We raise our eyes to the bright sky above us—it is darkness spangled with lamps; we gaze, and they recede, they shine from unfathomable depths of blue ether; still we gaze, and divine a holy serenity in their calm fires; and at length, to patient yearning eyes, they seem to yield the depths of their meaning, and walk their silent courses, a revelation of the eternal harmonies of the universe. We go to Vauxhall, we see long lines of fire; globes, stars, pyramids of fire—azure, ruby, emerald, and white. We are struck with the beauty and dazzling brightness of the scene. We look, we begin to see how it is made up—there is a nakedness about it. We approach the ruby—we find it is a little red lamp with a light in it; we turn to the azure—it is a little blue lamp with a light in it; they are hung on nails on a wooden scaffolding. We smell oil—we regret we have approached so near—we go back to our old place—we gaze at it again—we say, "Yes, it is very beautiful, no doubt,"—we go, and don't visit Vauxhall again. So it is with the decorative school of poetry. It needs but one perusal to give us all the pleasure we are capable of gathering from the sweet modulations, the rich and varied fancies, the nicely responding similes, the choicely culled sensual images and obvious sentiment of Moore: give a more sustained attention, look close for any depth of meaning, and you discover the barrenness of it all. There was no depth of soil in his nature capable of yielding the fruits of true poetry. He had neither fulness nor passionateness of nature, nor had he the imagination which perhaps can replace them. He was a delightful companion, a devoted son, a tender husband; he had a genial temper and a kindly nature; but he was small. "I look upon *Mooerr*," said Leigh Hunt's Spanish friend, "as an active little man." He *was* an active little man, a "little quiver fellow," as Justice Shallow says,—ready-witted, gay, indefatigable, with sharply-edged distinct ideas, and confidence in himself; he was manly in the sense of being high-spirited, but he wanted something of the breadth of manhood. He always bore the marks of his training—first as a home boy,

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and then as a singing-bird in London parties. He wanted an out-of-door mind; he wanted the education which a man gets by mingling with boys in athletic sports, and with men in the struggle of a profession. He is a carpet poet.

He complains himself that his boudoir education had stinted his growth. Perhaps it did; but Nature had fitted him for the dining-room and drawing-room, not for the woods and fields; she meant him to find his poetry in D'Herbelot, not in the living pages of nature; in the library at Bowood, not in the human heart with which he was surrounded. Those social hours which he embellished were the relaxations of the men with whom he lived; but they were his life. Writing was his business; but visiting was his occupation. For a great poet he was never formed. He was formed to do what he did well—to feel and to interpret music. He has himself left it on record, that his poetry originated in his desire to give an expression through a more articulate medium to the emotions and passions that music appeared to him to express. His was precisely the nature formed to feel the full charm of music; not perhaps to enter into its full beauties as an art, but to experience its full power over the emotions. He had precisely the delicate organisation which gives that refined zest to the pleasures of sense, and that nicety of discrimination in sensuous impressions, which are necessary to the gourmand, and necessary, but not sufficient, to enable a man to feel the full effects of music; but Moore also possessed, and in the highest degree, what more is wanted for the latter purpose. He had a mobility, a naked susceptibility in the emotional part of his nature, vibrating with every change of those impressions which his physical conformation made him so apt to receive. Hence his insight into the meaning of music; hence, too, his power of rendering its full meaning when himself playing and singing. He was not a great musician, nor was his voice remarkable for its power or compass, though eminently so for softness. It was the fineness and clearness of his articulation, and his faculty of breathing forth the whole soul of the music—it was his own sensibility, that gave him so wonderful a power over the sensibilities of his hearers:

> "'Twas not the air, 'twas not the words,
> But that deep magic in the chords,
> And in the lips, that gave such power
> As music knew not till that hour."

It was this that drew tears from all the women round him, and which sometimes so overpowered himself, that he burst into violent fits of weeping, and had to retire sobbing loudly from the room.

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Only a genius with equal insight into the meanings of music can pronounce whether he has truly interpreted the significance of the national airs with which his name is connected. Probably he felt their meaning better than he could reproduce it; still the common consent of men finds no flaw in his evocations of the hidden spirit, and no man was perhaps ever found so skilful in adapting language and rhythm to the music which was to accompany it, and of which it was to be the emotional exponent. There is no instance, as far as we are aware, in which he composed music to a given song. He inverted always the true position of the arts, making the higher subservient to the lower. "I can answer for their sound," he says, speaking of his songs, "with somewhat more confidence than for their sense." Hence it is hardly fair to read them, at least unless you remember the air. They lose, as he himself says, their *animæ dimidium* when dissociated from music. They are not what we usually call songs in English; brief lyrical poems, capable from their form and shortness of being set to music; short free utterances from the poet, embodying sometimes his very highest inspirations, as in the case of Ben Jonson and Goethe;—no, they are made to fit the music, just as some poets write verses to given illustrations. They may still be poems; it is to write a poem to extract and render the heart of music; but it can never be so high an exercise of art as when the poet has the full range of nature; and it is scarcely poetry at all when a man only racks his fancy for something which will go to the tune. The natural subordination of Moore's poetical genius to his musical one fitly adapted him for this sort of song-writing. He had no strong creative impulse urging him to make a form of his own instead of moving within forms ready made, no powerful imagination haunting him with ideal visions he must endow with the life of art; he could and did manufacture verse in a patient, steady, and skilful manner, and in his own special walk with unparalleled success, for he had in his hands the tools of all others the most necessary to such a workman—a brilliant and fertile fancy, a happy vein of wit, feeling not too deep to be readily made use of, and a fluent supply of words. A rich vocabulary, a full command over the resources of the English language, he had not; but he did not require it. He goes to work exactly like a jeweller, and uses the same kind of ornaments. He sends his publisher a correction, which he says will make the song "sparkle" more; he says he has robbed a prologue of its only "trinkets" to make up one of the Irish melodies; he leaves gaps to be filled up with "epithets" at his leisure;—every thing tends to show the unimpassioned methodical way in which he turned out his poetry. He says, "I have never doubted that poetry is a far more matter-of-fact thing

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than your people who are only matter-of-fact can understand or allow."

Still, some of his songs embody and express real feeling—these are chiefly the patriotic ones in the earlier numbers of the *Irish Melodies;* and often without touching us deeply he gives a sweet and airy expression to our enjoyments, our hopes, and our regrets. The great mass of his songs, however, it is not possible to read as poetry. Their number is amazing, and their variety wonderful, as far as it is in the power of fancy to afford variety; but mere fancy is so predominant over both thought and feeling, that this alone gives to them all an essential sameness. His songs follow one another like the waves on a flat shore—with an endless variety of curving lines of foam, but with an unchanging uniformity in the whole advance of the tide; the sun sparkles with a restless glitter over the ever new dancing wavelets and furrows of the sea; but the whole aspect of the scene remains the same. In his love poetry this is especially the case. We have none of the more profound or complex manifestations of the passion; he never attempts more than to hang the garland of his fancy over the most threadbare conventionalities of the subject. And it is for the most part a disagreeable class of conventionalities; you never get beyond "my friend Moore sporting on the bosom of Venus." It is always the same story, exhilaration at the approach of a thing with rosy lips, depression at the absence of a thing with rosy lips, remonstrances with things with beaming eyes, superiority of love to reason—*et hoc genus omne.* Contrast these decorated platitudes of Moore's with Burns's personal, direct, vigorous, passion-breathing songs. Rude as the latter sometimes are, they have a moving power and a genuine delicacy, because they come from the heart. But Moore lights the fire of his fancy at the senses. Burns was a peasant, and he wrote in the free and simple language of passion common to all stations, but ungraced with those higher charms which refinement and cultivation in the object of attachment naturally give to the expression of the feelings. But Moore spent all his life among the most highly bred women of England, and he writes as if he had lived in the times of Catullus and Horace —we don't mean with their grossness, but with the same trifling spirit and sensual inspirations. Nothing can well be more offensive than the whole tone of his poetry as regards the other sex. The little man struts about among his "girls" and his "Julias" and "Fannys" like a small Mahometan bantam cock. He treats the whole race of women like a set of dolls, vivified only for the sake of the pleasure he can derive from them. He never mentions them as if they had any existence on their own account. Most insufferable is he when he speaks of purity and

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innocence, as if they possessed it only in order to give them a greater charm for their lovers; when he says of the pleasures of indiscriminate attachments,

> "'Tis sweet, when all
> Their witcheries pall,
> To have a pure love to fly to;"

or when he infers that the advantage of having "woman, like something that's holy, watched over, and fenced from her childhood with purity round," is that she may come, "body and soul, fresh as spring to a lover!" Another very unpleasant style of his, though less common, is that which we find in such poems as *Love and the Novice*, where piety, gaiety, and love, are made up into a hotchpot.

The business-like way in which Moore wrote his verses is quite in keeping with his nature. Never was there a poet who was less of a dreamer; and under all his genial *abandon* was hidden a cool hard-headedness and a sharp insight into the true bearings of all worldly relations. His was the singular union of delicate and impressible senses; an almost quivering sensibility of the emotional nature, and a quick susceptibility to the more obvious forms of beauty, with a sceptical intellect, a special taste for facts, a cool discriminating tact, much *savoir faire*, and an absence of all enthusiasm except the temporary one of a half-sensuous excitement. His were the external adornments of a poet enfolding a man of the world. He would have compared himself to some hard-grained prosaic West-Indian tree (and he would have known the name of it), overhung by the gay luxuriant trailers and brilliant parasitic flowers of the tropics. This union, which is the true key to his genius, gives its character to all his poetry.

He is remarkable, moreover, for the passivity of his nature. He had none of that originating, anticipating mind which some men have,—no power of motion within himself; he was the creature of sensuous impressions; he was set in activity by external excitements. Observe his attitude towards nature. To some men the external world, the beauty of nature, the diversities of character, the joys of affection, come like the realisation of some preconceived idea, the outward clothing of a previous internal revelation; they have a moving principle within them ever on the search for that outward grace of form, or that living fulfilment of experience, which shall give body to their haunting desires. When affection comes, they say, "This is what I longed for;" when terrors overwhelm them, they say, "What I trembled at has arrived." In the face of nature, clothed in some new aspect of beauty, they see a prevision fulfilled; the purple hills come to them as interpreters; the fleeting stars and wind-driven

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clouds are things by which they are enabled to speak what burns within them. Like the formless waters, the restless longings flow to and fro, till some breath of external beauty moves over them, and a new creation rises out of the waves. In other men the sight of nature wakens the imagination which before slept; it stirs up new emotions: their thought is not, "Through this I can give a voice to what I have felt;" but "How much I desire to express what now I feel!" Moore was of all men the merest recipient of external influences; and he is a curious instance of how little a man can receive through the senses alone without the aid of a prepared imagination. He never felt the *finer* influences of things; none but the very commonest and most universally accepted manifestations of beauty revealed themselves to him. His eye was clouded.

The want of imagination is betrayed in his poetry by every defect which its absence necessitates. This faculty, as distinguished from the fancy, has been much discussed: but it has eluded its investigators; it is still a strange occult power, whose limits and whose operation remain unfathomed. It is not our purpose to add to the number of unrequited metaphysical anatomists. Suffice it that some men have a grasp of things unseen which others have not, and that in proportion to the degree in which they have it, is their power of vividly impressing upon others the subjects of their own imaginative conception. Now Moore has none of this power. His poetry is composed of a fleeting *succession* of images, ideas, and sentiments; each is not accessory to every other, so as to build up one conception, but each as it comes tends rather to obliterate and occupy the place of what went before, like the fleeting shadows of a magic-lantern. In his similes he is apt to make a transition from the thing to the illustration, and give the latter an utterly disproportioned degree of prominence and detail; he is apt, too, to make it illustrate not the essence but the accident of the matter in hand. His poetry wants the binding force of imagination; it is divergent; it coruscates, it does not shine. He touches on great thoughts and deep feelings, but in a way that shows they come from the surface of his mind, not from the depths of his nature.

A great poet, dealing with a remote time, and making it the subject of his art, seizes on its essential character, grasps the distinctive wholes of individual life in which it was embodied; and his imagination once thoroughly possessed with these, lets his mind run free as to the mass of petty externals, the accidents of his subject. He can trust his genius that they will all be instinctively kept true to the dominant image in the imagination; and that is all he can do. That is his idea of the time; if that is

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true, the accessories are true to that; if that is untrue, there is no use in the accessories being correct. Nay, it is an injury; for in the one case we have, if no true picture of former times, yet a work of art consistent with itself; and in the other we have a picture partly true and partly false, and a hampered and inharmonious work of art. From such an imagination did Shakespeare paint the times of Coriolanus, of Julius Cæsar, of Antony, and of Troilus. Moore begins in exactly the reverse way.

Let us examine how *Lalla Rookh* came to be written. He was not struck with any event or character in Eastern history, which he felt impelled to make the subject of a fiction. It occurred to him that the East was a new field, and that Eastern poetry would tell in the market. Does he, then, search Eastern history for a fitting theme? No, he falls to reading most industriously; but it is not to acquaint himself with the forms of Eastern character and the spirit of Eastern life, but, as he himself tells us, "to form a storehouse, as it were, of illustration purely oriental, and so familiarise myself with its various treasures, that, as quick as fancy required the aid of fact in her spiritings, the memory was ready, like another Ariel, at her strong bidding to furnish materials for the spell-work. Such was for a long while the sole object of my studies." And further on he says, "It was a slow and laborious collection of small facts that the first foundations of this fanciful romance were laid." Having got his materials, he found great difficulty in working them up. "I have still by me the beginnings of several stories, continued some of them to the length of three or four hundred lines, which, after in vain endeavouring to mould them into shape, I threw aside." . . . "At last, fortunately as it proved, the thought occurred to me of founding a story on the fierce struggles so long maintained between the Ghebers, or ancient fire-worshippers of Persia, and their haughty Moslem masters. The cause of tolerance was again my inspiring theme, and the spirit that had spoken in the melodies of Ireland soon found itself at home in the East." As soon as he had got an Irish centre for an Eastern story, it was all plain sailing. Some minds can find a sufficient pleasure in the accuracy and appropriateness of details—they admire the beauty and correctness of the *mise-en-scène*; to others, if the play be poor in itself, the characters shadowy and unreal, and the actors untrue to life, then the scene-painting, the decorations, the "dresses of the period," the correct form of a *fibula*, or Macbeth in the right tartan, all go for nothing. Such a thing as a descriptive poem there may be, no doubt: the very thing a poet may have imagined, and which he limits himself to reproduce, may be the costume of a past society, or the scenery of a distant land, and he may

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enliven his poem with subordinate human interest; but such poetry is not of a very high class, nor very interesting to readers. The fault of *Lalla Rookh* is, that the poet, intending his main interest to lie in human character and incident, yet leaves these vague and colourless: they are such mere generalities—as in the *Fire-worshippers*, the fierce persecuting father, the lovely daughter, and the gallant patriot chief—that you cannot say whether they are true to the times or not, Persian or Irish; while the indistinctness of the picture is sought to be made up for by setting it in a most accurate and ornate Eastern frame. It may be said that, however subordinate, the details ought to be correct. But there is a limit to this too; it must depend on how far the poet and his readers are familiar with those details. A poet employs the fancy as the interpreter of the imagination, and for the vehicles of expression he uses those things which by habit and connection best do express his thought to his own and other minds; his similes and metaphors are not cut-and-dried comparisons derived from the natural objects and the historical associations which would be most familiar in the times or places with which he is dealing, but those which have most power to excite the imagination and vivify the discernment of modern minds. To convey poetry to us, the words and imagery used must have been part of our everyday lives—words with all the richness of their complicated associations, and things with whose every various aspect we are familiar. It is not very easy to deviate widely from the language in which you profess to write; but Moore's poetry is crowded with imagery derived from things and facts of which we know nothing, and a simile does its work very ineffectually when you have to read a prose note to understand its meaning.

His witty verses do not require any very minute examination. He has a keen sense of the ridiculous, and a happy knack of expression; his poems are made up of a series of epigrammatic points, very felicitously turned, but revolving too much on the double meanings of words and phrases. He has humour, but he doesn't give it free play; he compresses it into the forms of wit, where it moves hampered, like the jovial Bob Fudge in his French stays. Sometimes both idea and expression are genuinely humorous; as where he makes the bishops say, when reminded of the self-denying habits of their early predecessors,

"We think it pious, but absurd;"

and where, in one of his letters, he complains that "nothing goes right in this world, except for those with whom every thing, *please God*, will go wrong in the other." This almost rivals a saying he tells of Charles Lamb's, when an elderly lady, after boring him with all the good qualities of some friend of hers,

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ended with, "I know him, bless him!" "Well, I don't," said Lamb; "but damn him at a hazard!"

For his social qualities we are mainly dependent on the evidence of others: but they must have been great to secure him the advantages they did. Besides his peculiar gift in singing, he had a *bonhomie*, a vivacity, a readiness and brilliancy of wit, and an easy familiarity with social forms, which the world found irresistible; and which took an additional attraction for English circles from their association with that sort of warmth which an Irishman or a Frenchman throws into his demeanour during the most casual intercourse, and which only seems insincere to an Englishman, because to him it is not natural unless his feelings are more deeply and permanently engaged. He was quite at home in the polished and aristocratic sphere in which he moved, and never seems to have made any false compliances to gain or keep his position there. He judged things, no doubt, somewhat too much by a worldly test; and in his mode of speaking of some of his fellow poets, men of infinitely higher genius than himself, there is some trace of an air as if he had mistaken his social for real superiority. He speaks of the difficulty of not appearing fine in "such society" as he met at Christopher North's house in Edinburgh. He makes the most of any weak point in Wordsworth. He is a little superciliously surprised that Lamb only got 170*l.* for his *Letters of Elia;* "should have thought it more," he says. He estimated that he himself had made at least 20,000*l.* by his writings. Still, on the whole, he carried his singular fortunes without undue elation, and, though not a man who went out of his own way to interest himself in the history or welfare of others, was a kindly and well-meaning member of the brotherhood. His poetry, great as are its real shortcomings and defects when compared with the reputation it once enjoyed, has this merit, that it is original; and independently of its connection with music, it will always retain a place in the history of English literature, for it has been widely read, and has a distinctive character of its own. But its cloying assemblage of all that is most captivating to the senses, and to those emotions which lie nearest to them, can never have more than a passing interest for mature and cultivated minds. The mere jingle of words without sense will please children; glitter of fancy, vague declamation, and abstract passion, are sufficient for the next stage of development; but as the mind advances, it asks for harmony throughout all the form and essence of a poem, and in the poet for an insight wide and deep into the concrete forms of existence, above all, into those highest ones of individual life and character.

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Art. II.—GROTE ON ALEXANDER THE GREAT.

A History of Greece to the Death of Alexander. By George Grote. Vol. XII. Murray.

It is a just remark of Dr. Johnson's, and, what is unusual with him, it is a very feeling one, that we never do any thing consciously for the last time, of things, that is, which we have long been in the habit of doing, without sadness of heart. This sadness must be experienced by every one on the completion of some great literary task—his companion during many studious years, the receptacle of his matured thoughts, the object of alternate hopes and anxieties, perhaps, too, the instrument and pledge of a perpetual name. Gibbon has recorded in some of the most harmonious sentences that ever flowed from his pen the emotions which he felt after writing the final periods of his *Decline and Fall*. His words, however familiar, are sufficiently beautiful to justify their re-transcription. "It was on the day," he writes, "or rather night of the 27th of June 1787, between the hours of eleven and twelve, that I wrote the last lines of the last page in a summer-house in my garden. After laying down my pen, I took several turns in a *berceau*, or covered walk of acacias, which commands a prospect of the country, the lake, and the mountains. The air was temperate, the sky was serene, the silver orb of the moon was reflected from the waters, and all nature was silent. I will not dissemble the first emotions of joy on the recovery of my freedom and, perhaps, the establishment of my fame. But my pride was soon humbled, and a sober melancholy was spread over my mind, by the idea, that I had taken an everlasting leave of an old and agreeable companion, and that whatsoever might be the future fate of my history, the life of the historian must be short and precarious."

Mr. Grote's history is completed. Among many contemporary narratives remaining, or likely to remain unfinished, this one stands forth accomplished in all its parts—for the promised volume on the Platonic and Peripatetic Philosophy is a *πάρεργον*, not an essential portion of this history—and generally admitted to deserve all acceptation and applause. It is a proud thought for its author, that he has consummated the project of his youth: it is a noble possession for the age which has long watched its progress and now hails its conclusion: and, reflectively, it is a splendid testimonial to ancient Hellas itself, that, removed from us as they are by more than two thousand years, its sages, heroes, arts, and institutions still retain a lively interest

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for a people so pre-occupied as that of England in the nineteenth century by its own innumerable cares and controversies imperial, social, or religious.

It is not our design to review Mr. Grote's history generally, but to limit our attention, on this occasion, to such portions of it as relate to the Macedonian autocracy, and especially to the character and conquests of Alexander. Down to this period we generally acquiesce in the historian's views of men and events, and cannot but applaud the original and comprehensive spirit with which he has read and represented the annals of Greece. From his estimate of the Macedonian era, therefore, we dissent with the more regret. We think that it is erroneous, and even a blemish on his hitherto excellent narrative. The vindicator of the Athenian people appears to us to forego his judicial impartiality so soon as Philip and Alexander come into court.

The close of the republican era of Greece is one of the most memorable in the records of the world. Of the various members of the Hellenic federation, Sparta alone was virtually extinct. Its extinction was owing to the narrow basis of its constitution; to the prejudices and corruption of its haughty aristocracy. Its constitution was fitted for a camp pitched among a hostile population, and served its citizens so long as it was necessary to present an armed front to Greece within the Isthmus. But so soon as the Spartans aspired to foreign conquest or took part in the great political controversy between Europe and Asia, their very virtues, being factitious and opposed to the laws of human development, were converted into vices; the most isolated of nations became the most grasping and aggressive, the most frugal and hardy the most greedy of pelf and the most prodigal in its self-indulgence. Twice the Spartan oligarchy was deposed from the leadership of Greece by the general murmurs and indignation of its allies and subjects. Its *harmosts* were more intolerable rulers than the Persian satraps or the Greek despots: its home-government was as venal as the ministers of the worst of the Ptolemies or the Comneni. Neither honour nor troops of friends stood around the death-bed of this decayed and decrepit oligarchy. But Athens, although declined from its high estate when Philip excluded its citizens from Amphipolis and vanquished them at Chæronea, was hardly degraded, since it contained Demosthenes, and men who responded to his eloquent appeals and disinterested counsels. For Athens there was a possibility of self-restoration, had its sons been as inclined to act upon, as they were to approve, good advice. They succumbed because they procrastinated, and because, like the Italian republics, they placed in the hands of mercenaries the arms that ought to have been wielded by the

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citizens themselves. In the century before Alexander, Thebes, which had been hitherto almost the least, and certainly the least noble, among the Hellenic states, shook off its sloth, put forth unexpected energy, rolled back upon Sparta the tide of victory, and though destined to a fate that made the ears of all who heard of it tingle, and the eyes of all who beheld it dim, yet maintained to the last an attitude worthy of the countrymen of Pelopidas and Epaminondas. Arcadia and Argolis, always second-rate members of the federation, had not visibly declined: Messenia retained its poverty and independence: Elis generally preserved its sacred character, and periodically attracted to its festivals all who spoke the language of the Greeks or worshipped Olympian Zeus: Corinth was still the resort of the busy and the voluptuous, and its yet virgin citadel looked down upon the double harbour thronged with the masts of Sicily and the lesser Asia: while for the Achæans was reserved the destiny of gathering up for the last time, before the Roman eagles "flouted cold the banners" of Hellenic freedom, the elements of civil and social order, and of presenting the august spectacle of a federation guided by wise laws and sustained by native valour.

But there was a worm at the root of the permanence and prosperity of Greece as a federal nation. Faction and corruption had relaxed or shrivelled up the sinews of political virtue, and the events of the Sacred War had shaken the foundations of the national religion, already sapped by the philosophical schools. Even Plato taught that the wise man may lawfully stand aloof from the occupations and intrigues of politics; and Aristotle busied himself rather with universal man than with the interests of his adopted city. And if Plato and his most distinguished pupil had tended by their lessons "to slacken public virtue and abate her edge," the doctrines of the sophists were yet more injurious to political energy and independence. The "unjust reason" survived the banter of Aristophanes; and although Demosthenes appealed to the example of the men of Marathon, the Athenians applauded but did not emulate the active valour of their forefathers. The great mutations, indeed, of both Athens and Sparta, had been acted, and none of the inferior commonwealths, either north or south of the Bay of Corinth, had the power or perhaps the wish to succeed to the vacant space. The military prestige of Sparta had expired: the naval predominancy of Athens was on the wane: her island dominion had cast off her yoke: and Rhodes was rapidly becoming the sea-queen of the Ægean. Hostility against Persia no longer strengthened the bonds of Hellenic union. On the contrary, the gold and promises of the great king multiplied and envenomed the factions of the Greek commonwealths. The danger which had been repelled at Marathon and Platæa now

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menaced Greece from another quarter yet nearer and more formidable. "A nation of yesterday," directed by the genius of an accomplished chief, sprang into firm though sudden existence; and while the Athenians were debating whether Macedon should be accounted Greek or barbarian, Macedon had constituted itself the arbiter of Greece. The hour for change had arrived and with it the man. The fluctuating resolutions of the Athenians were no match for the undivided will of Philip; *his* movements were planned and executed with secrecy and speed, while *theirs* were proclaimed in the market-place, and paralysed by delay. Greece, defended by mercenaries, could not resume its martial habits; and its civic levies went down before the militia of Macedon, as the Eubœan cornfields bent beneath the blasts from the Thracian hills. Yet the end of republican Hellas was less ignoble than that of most ancient realms: the Greeks, though enervated, were not utterly corrupt: they had passed into the sixth age of senescence, but not into the seventh of decrepitude.

Never, indeed, has a nation set more brilliantly than republican Greece. The gray hue of evening rested on Europe alone: the horizontal beams of Hellenic culture diffused themselves over all western Asia, warmed into new life the primeval homes of civilisation, and even lighted up the fierce and rude tribes of Bokhara and Cabul. The conquests of Alexander enlarged the borders of the civilised world: those who drank the waters of the Oxus and Hyphasis learned to reverence the name of Athens and Delphi: the long-sealed kingdom of Egypt was brought within the European pale: Alexandria received and cherished the embers of Hellas, became for ten centuries the centre of commerce and literature, and by its ports on the Red Sea paved the way for the re-union of the eastern and western branches of the great Caucasian family.

It is among the conditions of a perfect historical era that it shall comprise a conspicuous *terminus a quo*, and an equally conspicuous *terminus ad quem*; that is to say, its beginning and its end shall be marked by some signal catastrophe dividing the era at either limit from whatsoever precedes and whatsoever follows it. The narrative now completed by Mr. Grote enjoys this rare privilege. At one end are visible the sacrifice at Aulis, the black-bearded kings on the Trojan beach, the ten years' siege and "the desolation of a hostile city." At the other we have Asia for the third time vanquished; Persepolis, a second Troy, reddening the horizon with its flames; and Babylon, which had successively opened its gates to the Mede and the Persian, entertaining in the halls of Belus the descendant of Æacus, and echoing along the quays of the Euphrates the tramp of Macedonian sentries. The interim is a rehearsal on a small stage of

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the great European drama, in which republics with a territory no larger than an English county play the parts of England or France, and wars are carried on by armies inferior in numbers to Cæsar's tenth legion or Napoleon's old guard.

Such respectively are the limits of the work of which the concluding volume is now before us. On that work Mr. Grote has employed all the muniments of ancient record and modern investigation, and generally embodied them in language befitting such "high argument." The readers of the first ten volumes will be fully aware of their author's republican predilections; and so far they are both in place and season. For he has nobly vindicated a noble people: he has recited the story of Athens as Pericles or Demosthenes would have wished it to be told: his occasional sketches of the arts, literature, and philosophy of Greece justly and agreeably relieve the narrative of its wars and intrigues; and this, the latest monument to the Attic *demus*, is on the whole the most worthy of all that have hitherto commemorated its errors and its virtues.

We confess, however, that so far as regards his eleventh and twelfth volumes, Mr. Grote has frequently disappointed us: not that we love Athens less than he does, or less lament the extinction of its liberties by the strong arm of Macedon; but in these volumes Mr. Grote has, in our opinion, dropped the calmness of the judge and adopted the prejudices of the advocate. He sees only with the eyes and hears only with the ears of Demosthenes and his faction; forgetting the peculiar temptations of the orator to exaggerate, of the party-leader to misrepresent the acts and motives of his opponents. We can understand Mr. Grote's disregard of Isocrates, and even his dislike to Phocion; for the one was possessed by the overweening conceit that his rounded periods would save the state, and the other was a kind of heathen Puritan who deemed that dressing like a pauper and dining on herbs would render back to his countrymen the hardy worth of their ancestors. With each of these good men it fared as it will always fare with *doctrinaires* in political revolutions: Isocrates, who had spent his life and wasted gallons of midnight-oil in attempting to convince the Greeks of the propriety of putting themselves under an autocrator, died of chagrin when a practical autocrator presented himself at Chæronea; and Phocion suffered as a traitor, although his only crimes were weakness and indecision. For his dislike of such politicians we can make all allowance; but we cannot so readily understand Mr. Grote's insensibility to the genius of Philip. Of Philip he writes with the temper and in the tone of an Olynthian exile: he is a liar, a drunkard, a voluptuary, a base Bezonian, two parts Illyrian to one Greek. To one thus prepossessed it is nothing that Philip called a nation

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into being; converted an irregular militia into a disciplined army; introduced among rude mountaineers the germs of civilised life; or won cities and provinces with less expense of blood, and less disturbance of property and law, than were sometimes caused by the civil broils of Phlius and Sicyon. Nor is it any thing in the historian's estimate of Philip, that by adroit diplomacy or well-directed valour he knit together once again the loosened joints of the Greek confederation, and made it capable of re-asserting the superiority of Europe over Asia.

Indifferent to, or inapprehensive of Philip's merits, it was hardly to be expected that Mr. Grote would appreciate those of Alexander. He sees in him only an Achilles, petulant, irascible, and insatiable of glory. He subscribes to the censure of the Roman satirist:

"Unus Pellæo juveni non sufficit orbis."

He admits, indeed, that his military genius was eminent and precocious as that of Hannibal and Napoleon; but he ignores or doubts of his designs for amalgamating Europe with Asia, for removing the local partialities of the one, and the servile apathy of the other. Alexander was, according to Mr. Grote, a conqueror in no higher sense of the term than Timur or Genghis; the leader of an invading horde; the supplanter of an ancient empire; *gaudens viam fecisse ruinæ;* the rider on the whirlwind of desolation, actuated by no higher principle than incapacity for repose and lust of appropriation.

It is no part of our present design to compare Mr. Grote's history with Bishop Thirlwall's. The latter will perhaps be more prized by those who consult for themselves the original records; the former will be preferred by those who desire to have antiquity expounded by the modern lights of the statesman and the economist. There is room, indeed, and occasion for both of these works in every well-stored library. So far, however, as regards the epoch with which we are now concerned, we have no hesitation in giving the preference to Dr. Thirlwall's history. His account of Alexander is not only the most finished portion of his own narrative, but also one of the most accurate and animated historical compositions of the present day.

Alexander's character presents so many aspects, that it has furnished historians, moralists, fabulists, and satirists with themes for grave dissertation or sarcastic wit. The satirists, naturally enough, have taken the ignobler view: to reduce the noble and the lofty to a common level is meat and drink to the Juvenals and Lucians. In their censure Alexander was an indiscriminate butcher, or a petulant boy who sported with men's lives as if they had been the lives of bears and lions, and wept when his day's

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sport was over. To Fielding he seemed a superior kind of Jonathan Wild; to Seneca the murder of Cleitus and the cup of Hercules afforded perpetual texts for sermons against anger and intemperance. Such perversions of fact, however, do little real harm. It is understood that they barb an epigram or point a moral. It is only when adopted by the grave historian that they become prejudicial, since the light words of Scapin or the commonplaces of Zeno are then apt to ossify into popular convictions. The fables which relate to Alexander are generally honourable to his memory. In the medieval legends of Western Europe the Macedonian conqueror is described as a *preux chevalier*, running through the ordinary adventures of a foe of Paynims, a destroyer of monsters, or a champion of distressed damsels. The Eastern legends are mostly of an ethical character. In them Alexander is introduced as an emblem of the transitoriness of earthly glory, as a preacher by his example against pride and ambition. Beside his bier death is eloquent: in the presence of his tomb crowns and sceptres stand reproved. He is, indeed, in these fables, the greatest of mortals, a little lower only than the angels or the genii who do the errands of Providence in the height and in the depth, or watch over the issues of birth and death. He is never portrayed in them as "Macedonia's madman," but as an exemplar monarch, such as Nimrod or Cyrus, commissioned by heaven to scourge guilty nations, redress ancestral wrongs, and afford to the sons of earth an instance of surpassing valour and greatness. The moral grandeur with which they invest him is an echo of the impression current throughout the East of the greatest of western conquerors.

Of Alexander's history the documents are less full and satisfactory than we could desire, yet more copious and authentic on the whole than is ordinary with the records of ancient statesmen and warriors. He himself envied the fortune of Achilles, who had Homer for his chronicler: it would have been better for him had he, like Brasidas, possessed such an historian as Thucydides: we should in that case at least have understood how far the conquest of Asia was the concurrent act of Greece, or merely the achievement of personal ambition. We might then have been able to trace the influence of Aristotle upon his pupil's disposition; the relations between the old Macedonian faction which regarded the vanquished as the Spaniards regarded the Indians, and the partisans of the king who aided him in his design of reconciling Greeks and Persians by equal laws, intermarriage, and the bonds of a common language. In the absence of such a guide we must be content with comparing opposite accounts and collecting probable inferences. We really do possess a considerable amount of contemporary testimony. Plutarch's life of Alexander is indeed

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infected by the sophists and declaimers who took him for their texts on the vanity of human greatness and the vices of tyrants. Yet he had evidently before him some records of a better kind by writers not too remote from the events. In the library of Alexandria Diodorus had the opportunity of seeing and weighing many documents in which the acts, and probably the sayings, of the founder of the city were recorded; nor is it likely that the diary of Eumenes of Cardia, the king's private secretary, was wanting in a collection of books deposited in the museum of the Ptolemies. Neither Plutarch nor Diodorus, however, possessed the critical faculty of the historian. Arrian, on the contrary, exercised almost the sceptical caution of the moderns, and by his diligence and enthusiasm in some measure counterbalanced his disadvantage in writing so many centuries after the events he describes. Had we, indeed, the means of comparing his vouchers with one another, we should probably find that Arrian's narrative is tesselated with many fragments from authors now lost, since he has made such good use of the journals of Ptolemy and Aristobulus. Be this as it may, we are able to inspect Alexander's history nearly as closely as Cæsar's; for, although we possess no record of them, like the Commentaries on the Gaulish and Civil Wars, no counter-statement like Cicero's Epistles, neither are we perplexed by the inconsistencies of such mere *ex-parte* manifestos.

We do not propose to abridge or to discuss minutely Mr. Grote's account of Alexander: in the first place, because the history is pretty generally known; and in the next, because Mr. Grote himself has been more than usually concise. Looking at the space allotted to Cleon and other republican worthies, we have some reason to complain of the scanty room assigned to the Macedonian conquests. He has apparently regarded them with the aversion or jealousy of a contemporary Athenian, to whom the names of Issus and Arbela were gall, and the new Hellenic empire wormwood. And his aversion is the more conspicuous, since, in the chapters following Alexander's decease, when Athens comes again to the front, the historian resumes his wonted vigour and animation. He is an Antæus who requires republican ground for the full development of his powers. We shall therefore attempt to bring prominently into view such portions only of Alexander's career or designs as Mr. Grote has kept in the shade.

For Macedon to become an Hellenic state at all, much more the leading member of the Hellenic confederation, a total revolution at home was indispensable. A single life or a single ruler would not have sufficed for that arduous task, nor would the task have been suited to the impatient temperament of Alexander.

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For its fulfilment were required partly the political genius of a Richelieu, and partly the active valour of Henri Quatre. The statesman and the soldier were combined in Philip, and the school in which he was trained was singularly favourable to the formation of either character. His early misfortunes were probably the source of his own greatness and the rapid improvement of the Macedonian people. Had Philip been undisputed heir to a throne, instead of being an exile or a hostage, he would doubtless, like his forefathers, have been the chief of uncivilised clans, whose greatest feats were forays into the Epirot or Triballian borders, and whose highest enjoyments were the chase and the banquet. But during his detention at Thebes, Philip had opportunities for studying the character, if he did not enjoy the acquaintance, of the foremost man of all Greece. The ward of Pelopidas can have scarcely been a stranger to Epaminondas; and if the civil virtues of the great Theban were without influence on the Macedonian prince, his military genius must in the highest degree have interested and instructed him. The most virtuous of Theban citizens was also the ablest soldier in Greece. He had adopted and improved upon the strategic innovations of Iphicrates; and his new tactics destroyed for ever the prestige of the Spartan phalanx. The aspect of Greece in that age would not be lost upon so shrewd an observer. Its leading states, Sparta and Athens formerly, and Thebes at the moment, owed their power and prosperity to their respective supremacy over a league of smaller communities: nor had Greece ever been so flourishing as when it was divided into two principal sections, guided within the Peloponnesus by Lacedæmon, and north of the Isthmus by Attica. Macedonia was weak and barbarous for the same cause that Germany was so in the twelfth century, or Scotland in the reign of James V. The authority of the crown was disputed and enfeebled by the power of the nobles: each fortalice contained a petty tyrant, and nearly every valley was commanded by a petty fortalice. The king was therefore weak: the people were oppressed in peace or harassed by incessant wars; while the nobles, who hardly acknowledged an equal and disdained a superior, were as restless and disorderly as Black George of Douglas himself. We know little of Philip's earlier deeds; but that he found means of taming these wild men is obvious, since he bequeathed to his successor counsellors second to none, and captains superior to any in the more civilised portions of Greece. The Macedonian phalanx, even though it proved eventually inferior to the Roman legion, was yet the most effective arrangement of such troops as Philip could obtain. In the phalanx the recruit became speedily serviceable, since he lent strength and weight to the veterans in front, and

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learned in the security of the columns-centre to wield the *sarissa*, which he would afterwards use with effect as file-leader. The phalanx also was of all possible combinations of men the most formidable against an Asiatic army. It could not be shaken by a charge of horse; while against the spearmen and archers of Persia it was as effective as the Burgundian men-at-arms against the rabble of pikemen who defended or disgraced Ghent and Bruges. The phalanx, though not invented, was considerably improved by Philip, and handed over to Alexander the most efficient and irresistible among the machines of war. Until Philip's reign, Macedonia can hardly be said to have had a capital; for Pella, in comparison with Olynthus or Amphipolis, was little more than an ordinary market-town. But under his cherishing care it rose to the dignity of a royal city. It was adorned with arsenals, public offices, and a royal palace; and although the Athenian comic poets affected to deride the manners of its court, yet there is no reason for believing the Macedonian nobles less polished than the marshals of France under Napoleon I. Rude, indeed, as they may have been in their mountain fastnesses, they were not so far removed from Greece as to be utterly strangers to its refinements. The kings of Macedon had long been the guests and friends of the Athenian people. Many a poet and philosopher found the court of Pella a safer residence than Athens, where the one was in peril of fines for his banter, and the other of a dose of hemlock for his opinions. When, indeed, such men as Euripides and Aristotle enjoyed its shelter and hospitality, we may fairly call in question the barbarism imputed to it by the Athenian orators. The Macedonians of the upper ranks were hard drinkers, and possibly gamblers also—gaming and the bottle are common alike to Greek and barbarian. Hard drinking and gambling were rife at every German court in the eighteenth century, even when the refined vices of Paris were sedulously copied at Dresden, Vienna, and Berlin. The Macedonian kings wrote and spoke pure Attic better than either Frederic or Augustus spoke or wrote French. Maria Theresa delighted her good people by the purity of her Viennese patois, while she committed fearful solecisms in her correspondence with the Duc de Choiseul and Louis Quinze. Yet although Voltaire could laugh at the "*poeshie de mon roi*," and at the ceremonial of the great empress, no grave historian has ever classed either of them with barbarians; and the censure of Demosthenes is about of the same value as the sarcasm of Voltaire. At the time of Alexander's birth, the headship of the Hellenic confederation can hardly have presented itself as a possibility to Philip's imagination. He had work nearer home with Olynthus: his northern borders were yet to be secured from their unquiet neighbours, his western to be ex-

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panded to the sea-coast. But he had already made his paternal kingdom united and powerful, worthy to be adopted as an Hellenic state, and he determined that the heir of his throne should possess the accomplishments of an Athenian statesman and soldier. The Homeric Poems were then to the youth of Greece what the Bible is now to the youth of Britain. They were the basis of a liberal education: their mythology lay at the root of the popular creed, and was deeply entwined with the popular ceremonies and amusements; they were much better known than Milton or Shakespeare at the present moment by nine-tenths of Englishmen: they were as familiar to the herb-woman, who could not read a line of them, as to the philosopher who cited them in his lectures. To the boy Alexander the Iliad and Odyssey were the Bible, Shakespeare, and Milton in one: and to him, as the reputed descendant of Achilles, they sounded not merely as the great anthem of the heroic age of Greece, but also as the song of the house-bard recounting the deeds of the sires of the kings and princes of Macedon. The Homeric lessons were inculcated in a manner that directly appealed to Alexander's feelings and imagination. His tutor Lysimachus won his heart by calling himself Phœnix—Alexander, Achilles—and Philip by the name of Peleus. Of Alexander's boyish recitations a curious and unquestionable anecdote has been preserved; and it denotes the literary character of the court of Pella. He was ten years old when an Athenian legation, including both Æschines and Demosthenes, came thither to treat about peace. While Philip entertained them at table in his usual agreeable and convivial manner, the boy Alexander recited for their amusement certain passages of poetry which he had learnt, and delivered in response with another boy a dialogue out of one of the Grecian dramas.

Such a training was likely to produce a second Pelides: but the imaginative faculties of Alexander were not more sedulously cultivated than his intellectual powers. Of the part taken by Aristotle in his education we are not informed, whether he superintended it generally, or whether he gave immediate instruction. But it seems scarcely possible to overlook, although Mr. Grote does so, the influence of Aristotle upon his pupil. Intellectual as well as political Greece was in that age enlarging its horizon. Aristotle strode over the realm of knowledge as boldly as Alexander strode over the realm of Persia. Each of them thought nothing done while aught remained to do. Each of them regarded mankind from a higher and more liberal level than that of the local and limitary prejudices of Greece. They recognised, indeed, the superiority of Greek to barbarian, but they did not regard that superiority as an inexorable law of nature.

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The Greek might elevate his ruder and weaker brother; the weaker brother be gradually brought within the precincts of civil and social refinement. Mr. Grote indulges in some special pleading against Alexander on the score of Aristotle's instructions. We think that Alexander's demeanour and policy towards his eastern subjects refutes the notion that he sought to lower the Greek to the level of the Asiatic, instead of raising the Asiatic to the standard of the Greek.

On the authority of a single passage in Plutarch, Mr. Grote represents Alexander as having latterly become so much incensed against his tutor as even to threaten him with punishment. The premises for such an assumption are somewhat slender; though it is possible that the king may have resented Aristotle's correspondence with the Macedonian conservatives, who thwarted his schemes of administration, and can have felt little indebted to him for saddling him with so perverse and intractable an army-chaplain as the philosopher Callisthenes. But even if "jealousies and perturbations" came between them, Alexander never ceased to profit by the Stageirite's instructions. So far as his incessant occupations allowed, he cultivated literature, and with as refined a taste as Cæsar himself. Throughout his life he retained a passionate interest in the Iliad; a copy of which, said to have been corrected by Aristotle himself, he carried with him in his campaigns, and after his victory at Issus deposited in a golden casket—the most sumptuous of the great king's spoils. At a later period, and while he was in Upper Asia, Harpalus sent to him, as the most acceptable present from Greece, a packet containing tragedies of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, the histories of Philistus, and the dithyrambic poems of Telestes. In medicine, as it was then practised, he was as well instructed as the ablest of his medical staff; his interest in geographical science was intense; and his camp contained many distinguished men of letters, whose discourse refined and elevated the conviviality of the Macedonian mess-room.

Dr. Thirlwall has admitted into his narrative many anecdotes of Alexander's youth which Mr. Grote thinks unworthy of credit. Before strife came between them, Philip seems to have clearly discerned the powers and the promise of his destined heir, and these anecdotes justify his anticipations; nor can we discover any grounds for omitting them as apocryphal. Macedon, the proud father acknowledged, was too narrow a field for a prince so gifted: he displayed no jealousy even when he heard that the Macedonians called Philip their leader—Alexander their king. Philip's own ambition would perhaps have been limited to the rescuing from the grasp of the Persian Asia west of Mount Taurus. With his well-trained army and his strategic genius, he would

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doubtless have accomplished all or even more than the Spartan king Agesilaus had sixty years before attempted with inferior means and ability: yet Philip would probably not have ventured beyond the Syrian gates, or conceived the bold design of transferring to himself not only the western satrapies, but the vast empire of Persia in its length and breadth, from the Mediterranean to the Hyphasis. Although cut off in the vigour of manhood, Philip had long survived the enthusiasm of youth. And the circumstances in which he was placed in early life called rather for caution and dissimulation than for the ardour and impulse of a conqueror. Around his throne were formidable rivals: around his kingdom were as formidable neighbours: the Olynthian League was no contemptible antagonist: and had Philip too early aroused the fears or jealousy of Athens, he would have encountered an army better appointed than his own, and a navy against which he could not have sent a single trireme. It is the constant burden of the appeals and reproaches of Demosthenes that the Athenians had made Philip great by allowing him time to advance his covert approaches, to beguile them by his simulated moderation, to steal from them ally after ally while he affected to consult their wishes or respect their decrees. This was not the education of one destined to conquer an empire rich in the sinews of war, formidable from its extent and the terror of its name, and able to purchase the aid of the numerous *condottieri* of Greece. Twenty years of astute policy, varied only by occasional feats of arms and demonstrations of power, had rendered Philip as wary as he was ambitious; and he would probably, therefore, have lacked the incontrollable impulse that formed so potent an element in Alexander's character.

Mr. Grote, indeed, does justice to Alexander's military genius, though he cannot resist the insinuation that he was more of an Achilles than an Agamemnon. But he does not bring prominently forth what was really one of the most conspicuous features in his history—the youth of the general, who, like Napoleon, won his signal victories before he was thirty, and combined, like Henri Quatre, the spirit of a knight who has his spurs to win with the cool sagacity of a Marlborough or a Wellington. At times Alexander exposed himself too freely; and in more than one instance, especially after his fortune seemed confirmed, risked his army in situations where he narrowly escaped the English disaster in Cabul. Like Attila, he relished too keenly *certaminis gaudia*—the zest of a war-embrace: and doubtless even his error confirmed and exalted the courage and devotion of his followers, and from the casual dangers incurred by his impulsive temper he rescued his army on each occasion

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with a promptness and sagacity surpassed by Hannibal alone, when drawn too far into the valleys of the Abruzzi by the craft of Fabius.

In the ninth year of his reign and in the thirtieth of his age Alexander planted his standard on the banks of the Hyphasis, and for the first time since he crossed the Hellespont turned the heads of his columns westward. His retreat was imperatively demanded by his soldiers, who pined for the repose and luxury of Babylon, and were as weary of wandering to and fro on the earth as the comrades of Ulysses were weary of the incessant moan and heavings of the ocean. But Alexander himself cast a long and lingering look towards the land beyond the Indus,—that illimitable East, at whose portals he had scarcely arrived, but of whose wealth, power, and ancestral kingdoms rumours at least had reached him through his Indian guides. If the vision of an Oriental empire presented itself, as he owned it did, at two epochs in his career to Napoleon's imagination, a similar vision must have acted on Alexander with tenfold power. For Alexander stood almost at the furthest point which Napoleon could have aspired to reach, whether he had begun his march from Egypt or from Moscow. In the brief period of eight years he had achieved the most splendid enterprise ever undertaken up to that moment by a king of men. Cyrus, it is true, had descended from Khorasan to the Ægean Sea, had put an end to the second Assyrian empire, and re-united under one sceptre the realms of Nimrod and Nabopalassar. But the chief of the Pasargadæ pushed his victories too far: his end, if not ignominious, was obscure; and it was reserved for an alien to his name and blood to cement and consolidate the empire "on which the sun never rose and never set." Alexander lived scarcely long enough to test the solidity of *his* acquisitions, or to impart to them that systematic regularity which is visible in the rough draft of his plans transmitted to us. At the date, however, of his entrance into Babylon every province of the late empire of Darius bowed cheerfully or reluctantly before him. The great radii of his dominions were guarded by strong outposts or rising cities: the sea-coast, from the mouth of the Hebrus to that of the Nile, was awed by the combined fleets of Greece and Phœnicia; his veterans were planted in garrisons from Damascus, the most ancient of cities, to the Mardian and Bactrian hill-forts: return was impossible, for his weary or discontented soldiers were dispersed among homes as far distant from the Euphrates as the Euphrates was from the Hellespont: discipline was imperative, for they were planted in the heart of recently subdued races, whom the least excess or reverse on the part of their conquerors would arouse

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again to arms. So far, then, as in him lay, Alexander had secured his acquisitions, and in the repose of Babylon set himself strenuously to the work of re-organising and combining them into one uniform mass. Mr. Grote asserts that Alexander availed himself of the existing fiscal arrangements of the Persian kings, and was content with the classification of provinces as it had been finally made by Darius Hystaspes. But the historian, in his zeal to divest Alexander of every attribute except that of an insatiable conqueror, and desirous throughout to confound "Macedonia's madman" with "the Swede" Charles XII., has omitted to notice two circumstances most material to every just survey of Alexander's career: 1. the pace had been so rapid of his conquest, from the time of his embarcation at Sestos to the time when he retired from the Punjaub, that it was not only politic but unavoidable for him,—unless he had wished to convulse his new realms by crude innovations,—to accept for the moment whatever system, fiscal or imperial, he found in use; and 2. that not until he halted at Babylon did he commence a regular survey of the diversified mass of his conquests. His repose at Babylon—if the term repose can be properly applied to Alexander—was absorbed partly in surveying the Euphrates, with a view to rendering it again navigable, and partly in receiving from his lieutenants and prefects reports of the provinces intrusted to their charge. The roll and count of his winnings were nearly as follows:—In Europe he had effectually curbed to the north and west of his original kingdom the mountain tribes which had so often distracted the attention of Philip from the affairs of Greece, and all between the Strymon and the Danube acquiesced in the superiority of Macedon. By affording recruits to his armies, Greece had given hostages of her obedience; and indeed, notwithstanding the sullen refusal of Sparta to take part in the war, and the silent or expressed indignation of the anti-Macedonian faction in Athens, the members of the league felt a national pride in the success of their youthful autocrator. The old wrong was at length redressed: the invasions and intrigues of Persia were requited: the mitred spectre of the great king had vanished from the earth: the captives of his bow and spear had returned to their homes: the altars of Zeus, Athene, and Heracles were reared in Babylon beside the high altar of Belus: the flames of Persepolis had atoned for the burning of Athens, and in place of the spoils which Xerxes had borne away, three hundred suits of mail, the panoplies of as many Persian lords, were now suspended from the walls of the Acropolis. The lesser Asia, the kingdoms of Priam, Glaucus, and Sarpedon, the original seat of Hellenic civilisation, were now restored to Greece: the satrapies of Pharnabazus and Tissaphernes were

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once more Grecian provinces, governed by their own magistrates, and exempt from tithe or toll, from the rending away of their sons and daughters for the service or pleasures of the great king. Beyond the Syrian gates and along the sea-board of Palestine, the most ancient seats of commerce, Tyre, Sidon, and Gaza, were occupied by the Macedonians. The "white castle" of Memphis had expelled its garrison of the fire-worshipping race, which had cast to dogs and vultures the bodies of the Pharaohs, profaned the sanctuary of Apis, and brought the abomination of desolation into Thebes and Heliopolis. The glory of Memphis, however, was departing; since at the south-eastern corner of the Mareotid Lake the architect Dinocrates was busy in laying the foundations of a city which for ten centuries to come would be the emporium of eastern commerce and the asylum of western learning, and which still retains the name of the city of Alexander. The provinces east of the Euphrates had long constituted the real strength of the Persian empire. Its revenues had been principally derived from the rich kingdom of Syria, from the enterprising Greek cities of Asia within Taurus, and from the towns and harbours of Phœnicia. But its armies were recruited from the hardy mountain tribes of Upper Asia, which, even after Darius had for the third time staked and lost his empire on the result of a single action, tasked all Alexander's energy, and dealt more destruction on his ranks than the days of Issus and Arbela. But the Mardians, Oxians, and the subjects of king Porus had proved that their rude chivalry was no match for the Thessalian horse, and that their archers and slingers could make no impression on the Macedonian phalanx. They feared or respected their new antagonist: barbarians, if undisturbed in their hereditary customs, regard with indifference a change of masters: and Alexander's ranks were replenished by the most warlike of his recent foes. The dwellers in Mesopotamia were the Bengalese of antiquity: their climate enervated them: centuries of oppression had inured them to the yoke: and the Babylonians welcomed a conqueror who laid no new burdens upon them, and restricted neither their pleasures nor their superstition. Upon the entire circle of provinces so recently convulsed with war or with preparations for it, a great calm had settled, and both Greece and the East awaited with anxiety or indifference the decrees which should amalgamate Europe with Asia.

The decrees were never promulgated: a mightier hand than Alexander's arrested them: and the Macedonian empire, instead of being included in one pale, and regulated by a single mind, was broken up into hostile kingdoms, whose wars, vices, and convulsions render the history of Alexander's successors one of the least interesting and most calamitous chapters in the annals of

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mankind. It is with some surprise, accordingly, that we find Mr. Grote ascribing to the Macedonian kings of Egypt and Syria the merit of diffusing Greek civilisation over Asia. It would be nearly as just to attribute to Cromwell's major-generals the credit of Cromwell's practical reforms. Of the successors of Alexander Ptolemy Soter alone seems to have comprehended his sovereign's design; and there were many local circumstances in Egypt that enabled its first Macedonian ruler to adopt in a larger measure and with clearer perception than his co-partners in the imperial inheritance, the ideas of his departed chief.

We have briefly surveyed Alexander's conquests: we now must glance over the condition of the empiré which he overthrew. To ride, to shoot with the bow, and to speak truth, were the real or the pretended virtues of the ancient Persians. They retained the easier of these virtues, and abandoned the more difficult. At the time of the Macedonian invasion the Persian cavalry and archers had but little declined from the skill or prowess of their forefathers; but if we may judge of the nation by its kings and satraps, and if Greek chroniclers have not grossly misrepresented them, truth had long been "a garment out of fashion" both at the regal and vice-regal courts. Plutarch's life of Artaxerxes Mnemon is among the most curious, if not the most interesting of records. It is more curious as a register of crime than the chronicle of any petty Italian republic when governed by an Ezzelino or a Sforza. It is more illustrative of the miseries and crimes of despots than any chapter in the history of the Byzantine Cæsars. It is a maze, without any apparent plan, of intrigues, perjuries, and murders,—of fear, jealousy, and hatred, more perplexing to unravel than the precepts of Machiavel or the purposes of Philip II. Yet this labyrinth of dark plots and darker crimes is no more than a literal, though imperfect account of the Persian court a century before the great king was weighed in the balance and found wanting, and his kingdom taken from him. The steps by which Darius mounted the throne are sufficiently indicative of the rottenness of his empire. The long reign of Artaxerxes was a prelude befitting the influence of such a prime minister as the eunuch Bagoas. We need go no further back than the reign of Ochus for proofs of the weakness and corruption of the Persian empire. Though he had regained Egypt, and by the destruction of Sidon re-established Persian influence in Phœnicia, Ochus was a *roi fainéant*, and Bagoas his mayor of the palace. Bagoas made and unmade kings as best suited his own fears or interest, and may perhaps have aspired to the throne himself. Ochus, through his cruelty and licentiousness, had become generally odious to his subjects, and was removed by poison. His youngest son Arses

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was raised to the throne, and Bagoas, in order that the king of *his* choice might be wholly dependent on himself, relieved him by poison of all his brothers. As soon, however, as Arses displayed symptoms of insubordination, he and all his children were murdered by their unscrupulous grand chamberlain. The person whom Bagoas next took into favour was a member of the royal family, the grandson of a brother of Artaxerxes II. In a private station Codomannus had distinguished himself by his valour, and had slain in single combat the stoutest warrior of the Cadùsians. His courage, however, seems to have expired with his subordinate rank; for, as king Darius, he manifested on no occasion the qualities either of a captain or a general. He was sagacious enough, indeed, to rid himself of his dangerous patron, and Bagoas was compelled to empty a cup of poison which he had mixed for his last nominee. Until tried Darius was esteemed well qualified to defend the throne which he had thus rescued from a degrading bondage, and until his reverses and incapacity had wearied out his subjects he was a popular and an honoured prince.

The looseness of the succession to the throne expresses the disorganised condition of the Persian empire at this period; and the reign of eunuchs has generally accompanied national decay. Every internal principle of cohesion was indeed lost. The Roman empire under its thirty tyrants was scarcely more disintegrated than the Persian at the date of the Macedonian invasion. For many years its dissolution had been suspended only by the jealousies of the satraps who might have each of them aspired to the throne. These great lords transmitted their authority to their sons without soliciting or awaiting the royal confirmation. They regarded, indeed, the decrees issued at Susa and Ecbatana with about as much reverence as Ali Pasha regarded the firman of Selim, or Mehemet Ali that of Mahmoud. Many provinces nominally adhering to the empire were virtually independent: attempts to coerce them were met by insurrection; and of the ample revenues which Darius Hystaspes had organised and Artaxerxes Mnemon received, scarcely a tithe reached the treasury in time of peace, and they were often entirely withheld by revolted viceroys. Life was as insecure as property; the provinces were exhausted by civil wars between the satraps; the few who were loyal among them awakened the jealousy of the court; and the rebel or traitor who could offer a sufficient bribe was often rewarded with the post of the governor who had remained faithful. Under an administration so weak and corrupt, the miseries of the people at large may be readily imagined.

In the western half of the empire the military spirit was dead. The king and the nobles alike maintained their authority by the

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aid of mercenaries whom their own turbulence or factions at home had driven to the great mart for hirelings. The readers of Xenophon's *Anabasis* are familiar with the mode by which Greeks with swords to let were engaged in the feuds of Persia. Under abler management these foreign levies might have prevented, or at least delayed, the destruction of the empire. In discipline and valour they were scarcely, if at all, inferior to the Macedonian phalanx, and in concert with the really excellent cavalry of Upper Asia might, if rightly handled, have checked Alexander's career at the very outset. But the hirers of mercenaries have seldom been known to trust them fully, and even the great Gustavus himself was at times suspicious of Ludovic Leslie's Scotch brigade. During the unsettled state of Hellas at the close of the Sacred War the lesser Asia swarmed with Greek exiles and adventurers. From these might have been collected, in sufficient numbers to cope with Philip and Alexander's forces, an army of the best soldiers and the greatest ruffians in the world. But none of the Persian kings seem to have entertained the thought of raising a standing army of Greeks. Their levies were renewed with each emergency; and since they were drawn indifferently from every quarter of Greece, no sentiments of local or national pride existed among them. Like the troops paid by the tyrants or commonwealths of Italy, a Greek Hawkwood or Dalgetty might within a few months be found in the ranks of the royal army, or in those of a rebellious satrap; and on more than one occasion the losses of Alexander were repaired by men whose purses were still heavy with the gold of Darius.

Against a kingdom so divided Alexander brought the strength and resources of a united and inexhausted people, guided by veteran generals and inspired by the enthusiasm of a youthful chief. Against an army so composed he led battalions animated by a corporate spirit, trained by the greatest master in the art of war, and now impelled by the prospect of exchanging the spare and rugged life of mountaineers for the plunder and luxuries of Asia. The young Achilles of Macedon was encountered by no Hector, although in Mentor of Rhodes Darius had an adviser scarcely inferior to Ulysses. The fate of empires is decided as much by the follies and omissions of the vanquished as by the wisdom and activity of the conqueror. Darius and his councillors were among Alexander's most efficient allies. Like Demosthenes, they may have underrated his abilities, and conceived that the troubles which greeted him on all sides at his accession would more than absorb all the talents and resources he possessed. With an ill-timed economy, Darius declined to furnish the Persian party in Athens with money, deeming that with Philip's death the peril of his own kingdom had passed away. The sub-

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sidies, indeed, were soon paid, or at least promised to be paid; but in the interim Alexander had secured his northern frontier, had laid Thebes in ashes, had confirmed the authority of Phocion in Athens, had silenced Demosthenes, and received from the states general at Corinth his own appointment as autocrator of Greece. Whence Mr. Grote has derived his opinion that the idea of a Pan-Hellenic league against Persia was unpopular, or obsolete in Greece, we are at a loss to conceive. Had it been as he represents, the neglect to take advantage of its unpopularity would only furnish another proof of the feebleness which faction had brought on Hellas generally. Had it been really obsolete, Alexander's invasion of Persia must have been delayed until the court at Susa would have been amply prepared to meet it. The calamity of Thebes undoubtedly struck terror into the Greek commonwealths; but it did not therefore disable them from resistance. A succession of such sieges would have crippled Alexander's army. Athens and the Peiræus were not less strong than when, nearly two centuries later, they held out against Sulla and his superb battering-train: Corinth was still a virgin fortress: and a few hundred of such troops as Leonidas led at Thermopylæ would have sealed the Isthmus and Peloponnesus against even the Macedonian infantry. But Mr. Grote, having in his preceding volume concealed the weakness and corruption of the democratical party in Athens, is compelled in his present one to represent Macedonian influence as weak, and the idea of an invasion of Persia as superannuated. His only authority for these statements is that of Demosthenes; and we would as soon accept the speeches of the Whigs in 1806 as evidence for the unpopularity of the war with Napoleon in England generally. The very circumstances of Greece at the time rendered some capital interest, some centralising effort essential to the general peace and order of the commonwealths. Each community lived in dread of a return of exiles; every Grecian city was infested with adventurers, who, disbanded from the Egyptian or Persian service, had brought back to their birthplaces the license of camps and the restlessness of mercenaries. A war with Asia would alone present sufficient attractions to these homeless men; they would indifferently enlist under a Macedonian or a Persian sergeant, and relieve "respectable housekeepers" of their undesirable presence. Neither is there any ground for believing with Mr. Grote that Greece generally had abandoned its desire of vengeance on Asia. It had applauded the appeals of Isocrates to Archidamus and Philip; it still greeted with acclamation the *Persæ* and the *Trojan Women* at the Dionysiac festivals: the rhapsodists could still draw crowds in the streets when they chanted the glories of Diomed and Achilles;

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the retreat of the Ten Thousand and the victories of Agesilaus were still hailed as tokens of the decay and decrepitude of their "ancient enemy."

Mr. Grote has been more impartial in recounting the errors of Darius than in describing the general feeling of Greece at this period regarding the Persian war. It is for poetry to describe this monarch as "great and good." History records against him vanity and indecision, if not indeed actual cowardice. His reign, indeed, seems not to have been stained by such portentous acts of cruelty and license as marked the reigns of his predecessors; and the grief of his queen and mother, if it were not caused by their loss of station, indicates domestic virtue in the husband and son. Darius may accordingly have been a man to be loved; but, unluckily for himself and his empire, he was not a man to be respected or feared. He was one of the sovereigns who appear destined to bring empires to an end—an Augustulus, a Roderic, a Louis XVI. Every step taken by Darius hastened the fall of his kingdom. He ceased, as we have already said, to support the Persian faction in Athens at the right moment; he neglected to bar the Hellespont against Alexander's passage, although the Phœnician fleet was at his disposal. For the errors committed at the battle of the Granicus his generals alone may have been responsible. They disregarded Memnon's counsel to avoid a general action, and with their cavalry—at least as efficient as Hannibal's Numidians—to convert Alexander's road through Asia within Taurus into a wilderness. They contested the passage of the Granicus with cavalry, instead of lining its banks with the long spears of the Grecian men-at-arms. But defeat conveyed no wisdom to Darius, and on each subsequent occasion when he commanded in person he repeated the blunder of his generals. For these errors, their probable cause, and their immediate effects, we have great pleasure in referring our readers to Mr. Grote's narrative. Had he dealt with Alexander's civil career as impartially as he describes his military operations, we should have had no grounds for objecting to his twelfth volume as inferior to its predecessors.

Alexander's entrance into Babylon was probably less impressive to Greece in general than his occupation of Susa and Ecbatana, or the sack and conflagration of Persepolis. Both poets and philosophers had taught the Greeks that an inexorable Nemesis impended over old great houses and guilty nations, and the doctrine seemed approved by the fate of the Persian capitals. The wrongs of Greece had been requited, and the vials emptied in turn upon the heads of its oppressors. But as against the Assyrian metropolis no similar sentiments prevailed. The Assyrians had never held Ionia in bondage, nor profaned the grove of

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the Attic Eumenides. But although to the Greeks the conquest of Babylon may have seemed only part of Alexander's design to subdue all Asia, the modern reader will be scarcely inclined to view with similar indifference this, the crowning circumstance in Alexander's career. To him it presents both an historical and a prophetical aspect. Regarded *à parte ante*, it was the consummation of a cycle of events that, opening with Nimrod, proceeded with Cyrus and the first Darius to the downfall of Persia itself: regarded *à parte post*, it was the beginning of movements that close with the decline of the Parthian kingdom. Nor were the circumstances attendant upon Alexander's entry into Babylon without their awe and mystery. Dark omens and prophecies crowded upon him as he approached the gates. The Chaldean priests warned him, shortly after he had crossed the Tigris, that the stars boded change, and counselled him to encamp without the city. For a moment Alexander paused: he had often given credence to dreams and visions, and attempted to expiate the wrath of the gods by costly sacrifices or unwonted ceremonies. But his scruples were overruled by the sophist Anaxarchus, who probably felt as much reverence for the Magi as Voltaire for the Dean and Chapter of St. Denis. Once within the walls, an imposing and diversified spectacle awaited him. The jealousy of Persia had condemned Babylon to premature decay: it had cut off its communication with the sea, and removed from it the great officers of government. But the approach of its new lord infused new vigour into the city of Belus. He was projecting an expedition to Arabia and the Persian Gulf, and Babylon was the dépôt of a fleet and army collected from every quarter of his enormous dominions. Nearchus had sailed up the Euphrates; Phœnician galleys had sailed down the river from Thapsacus; vast dockyards resounded to the axe and hammer, and huge ships of cypress-wood were already on the stocks. The plains of the Euphrates were the scenes of daily drillings and reviews; Lydia, Caria, and Persia had furnished 50,000 conscripts to the grand army; and Alexander seemed on the point of realising his project of amalgamating Persians and Macedonians into one military force. But conquest or discovery by sea formed a portion only of his manifold occupations at Babylon. On his march to the city he had been met by envoys from the most illustrious or the most obscure races of the world, by Greek republicans offering him golden crowns, by Æthiopians who drank the waters of the Astaboras, by the fair-haired Scythians from the Danube, by the plumed and kilted Iberians and Gauls from the far west, by the Lucanians, Bruttians, and Etruscans of Italy, and even (it is affirmed) by delegates from Rome itself. No modern congress, whether convened to discuss the Treaty of Westphalia or of

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Vienna, has ever approached in numbers or in splendour this assembly at Babylon. And the pomp and circumstances of death strangely interwove themselves into this web of busy and diversified life; for thousands of workmen were engaged in rearing the sumptuous funeral pile of Alexander's most beloved friend.

Had the obsequies of Hephæstion been deferred a few hours longer, the same pile might have sustained the bodies of the Macedonian Patroclus and Achilles. The vision of the Chaldeans had not been for nought. United in their lives, the Macedonian warriors were scarcely divided in death. Fever lurked in the veins of Alexander, imbibed probably during his recent expedition to the marshes of the Euphrates, and certainly aggravated by his own imprudence in prolonging the funeral banquet of Hephæstion. He survived his friend only eight days; and his death was ascribed by superstition to the wrath of Dionysus on account of the destruction of Thebes. A monument more durable than a pile of wood or hecatombs of cattle was in preparation for him: but more than two years elapsed before the most politic or fortunate of his captains deposited the royal bier in the mausoleum of Alexandria.

Centuries afterwards, when the last Macedonian kingdom had become a prefecture of a still more extensive empire, it was debated by the historians and rhetoricians of Rome whether, if Alexander had invaded Italy, and encountered Romans and Samnites, he would have planted his standard on the Capitoline, or perished like his kinsman the Epirot Alexander. Livy's patriotic feelings led him to maintain that the Roman fortune would have prevailed against Alexander, as it did against Philip and Perseus. But this assumption cannot be admitted. For even if the valour and discipline of the Roman infantry would have been a match for the phalanx, the Roman cavalry could not have competed with the Macedonian companions. And the comparison does not end with rank and file. The genius of the great Scipio was matured in the Spanish wars before he encountered Hannibal at Zama. But no Roman consul, annually changed, would have been equal to Alexander in military experience: no Roman army, levied for the campaign, would have been equal to veterans who had vanquished every variety of opponents. That Macedon and the great western republic might have confronted each other thus early, is not beyond the bounds of possibility; for that Alexander would have rested content with his eastern conquests is hardly probable. We know that he was meditating the subjugation of the Happy Arabia. Arabia subdued, his fleet would have easily transported his forces to Æthiopia and the Thebaid. The curiosity which impelled the Cæsar Germanicus

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to visit the ancient realm and monuments of the Pharaohs, would have been irresistible to Alexander, with whom the ardour for novelty was nearly as powerful as ambition itself. In Alexandria he possessed a centre of arms as available for western enterprise as Babylon was for eastern. On his pilgrimage to the shrine of Ammon, he had already crossed an arm of the great Libyan desert: and its sands would not have protected against his infinite resources and undefeated energy the rich valleys of Marmarica or the limestone platforms of Cyrene. Carthage he would have encountered on her own element with the fleets of Greece and Phœnicia: nor could the Punic mercenaries, then untrained by Hamilcar or Hannibal, have offered any effective resistance to his young Persian or old Macedonian guard. The mines of Iberia, then almost virgin, would have offered potent attractions; the warlike Spaniards, afterwards Hannibal's best troops, have furnished invaluable recruits. The Pyrenees and Alps would not have excluded veterans who had climbed the loftier terraces of Upper Asia; and from the little St. Bernard and Ligurian mountains might have descended on Etruria and Latium tenfold Hannibal's numbers, led by a commander of equal genius and enterprise. But the mission of Alexander was to spread Greek civilisation over Western Asia, not to encompass with his trophies the basin of the Mediterranean. From Babylon, as from a "specular mount," he may indeed have gazed westward, and deluded himself with the hope that his next *terminus* would be the Atlantic. But the western *terminus* appointed him by destiny was a tomb in his own Egyptian capital: and there, honoured and undisturbed by the changes of dynasties and creeds, his remains reposed until the deluge of Saracenic invasion covered both city and tomb with indiscriminate ruin. Once only, three centuries after his death, was the lid of his sarcophagus raised, and the features of Alexander scanned by mortal eye. He who gazed upon them was also a conqueror, although *his* victories were won as much by craft as by the sword. The most solemn moment in the life of Cæsar Augustus was that in which he bent over the embalmed corpse of Alexander the Great.

The history of Alexander remains to be written by some one who will hold the balance even between the fanatical applause of Droysen and Flathe, and the little less fanatical detraction of Mr. Grote. We have frankly expressed our disagreement from this learned and accomplished historian in his narrative of the Macedonian age of Greece: and we dissent from him with the more regret, because, in our opinion, his prejudices against the ablest statesman and the greatest soldier of the time have marred the fair proportions of a work which, if not "a possession for ever,"

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it will at least demand unusual learning, industry, and ability to supersede. Had he observed towards Philip and Alexander the impartiality he has displayed in dealing with Pericles and Cleon, he would have been as secure against the shafts of general criticism as he is invulnerable by such pedants as Mr. Shilleto.

We cannot, however, part with Mr. Grote with these expressions of difference and dissatisfaction. We have already noticed the resumption of his wonted strength and animation so soon as his narrative turns from Macedonian to Athenian affairs. From the ninety-fifth chapter to the conclusion of his work, his account, with some allowances for his anti-Macedonian prejudices, may be read with trust and pleasure. And much occurred during the invasion and conquest of Asia that reflects credit on the last days of Hellenic independence. The curtain can hardly be said to have dropped upon the drama of Athenian politics before the death of the champion and protagonist whose counsels, if followed at the right moment, might have checked the progress of Philip, and delayed the fall of Darius.

During the first years of Alexander's Asiatic campaigns Grecian history is stagnant and suspended. There are no events of public or political importance, and the local and municipal activity of each city may be comprised in the expressive words of Demosthenes, "We are repairing our streets and fountains, and whitening our battlements." The Grecian cities, great as well as small, existed only as appendages of the Macedonian kingdom. "The affairs of Greece," Aristotle pithily remarked, "are in the hands of the king." A public synod of the Greeks sat from time to time at Corinth; but it was principally employed in voting and registering congratulations to Alexander on his victories. The sleep of death was creeping over the fevered and exhausted frame of the Hellenic people. All vigour, indeed, was not exhausted; and recovery might have been still possible for "the sick man," had his remaining energies been seconded by prudence and courage on the part of his ally. But even in their own prostration, the Persians indirectly brought about the ruin of their ancient foe. Reverses during the earlier years of Alexander's campaign would have aroused a spirit of self-emancipation, in spite of the defeat at Chæronea and the destruction of Thebes. At the time, it was not unreasonable even for the least sanguine of politicians to speculate on such reverses. Alexander on landing in Asia was not only poor, but also in debt; while Darius possessed untold and almost inexhaustible treasures, which, expended at the right moment, would have drawn to his standard the *condottieri* of Greece, and multiplied his means, already far superior to Alexander's, of action by sea.

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But the Phœnician fleet was frittered away in separate havens or useless blockades, and Memnon's advice, to act vigorously by sea and strictly on the defensive by land, was disregarded.

Even down to the eve of the battle of Issus, Demosthenes and his party shared in the king of Persia's delusion of the possibility of vanquishing Alexander in pitched battle. But after that crowning disaster, during a year and a half, all hopes of the kind were abandoned. The Persian force seemed extinct; and Darius was so paralysed by the captivity of his family, that he allowed Tyre and Gaza to perish without the least effort to save them. The chances of victory by sea were then reversed, since the first navy in the world passed over, with the subjugation of Phœnicia, into the hands of the commander of the first army.

At length, in the spring of 331 B.C., the prospects of Greece once again seemed hopeful. Alexander had advanced far into the interior of Asia, was separated from his fleet and his garrisons by a march of many weeks, was for the third time confronted by the hosts of Persia; and remembering that this host was raised in the most warlike provinces of the empire, we may deem it to have been the best-appointed army ever collected by Darius. The catastrophe at Arbela, however, proved the Macedonians to be invincible in the field, and even their most eager opponents at Athens became aware that submission to Alexander had become a painful necessity. The anti-Macedonian leaders, indeed, who remained at Athens, were statesmen and orators; the generals and men of action had been demanded by Alexander, and had taken service with Darius. All, therefore, that even Demosthenes could do at such a crisis was, to watch the course of events, and to hold himself ready to take advantage of any casualties that might arrest the progress of Alexander.

Athens, indeed, had partially disarmed herself. Twenty of her triremes acted in concert with the Macedonian fleet; and these, combined with her citizens taken prisoners at the Granicus, rendered a pacific policy yet more imperative. Neither was it Demosthenes or his partisans who now guided the general policy of Athens. For the twelve years between the destruction of Thebes and the death of Alexander, Phocion and Demades were her ministers for foreign affairs; and although two more dissimilar members have seldom been found in the same cabinet, they coincided in pacific views and in the prudence of keeping well with the king and his representative Antipater.

The following sketch of one of the most virtuous of Athenian statesmen is too pleasing to be omitted. The personal characters of Demosthenes and Lycurgus shed an ennobling lustre on the darkening horizon of Greece:

"It deserves particular notice," Mr. Grote remarks, "that though

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the Macedonising policy was now decidedly in the ascendant, accepted even by dissentients as the only course admissible under the circumstances, and confirmed the more by each successive victory of Alexander—yet statesmen, like Lycurgus and Demosthenes, of notorious anti-Macedonian sentiment, still held a conspicuous and influential position, though of course restricted to matters of internal administration. Thus Lycurgus continued to be the real acting minister of finance for three successive Panathenaic intervals of four years each, or for an uninterrupted period of twelve years. He superintended not merely the entire collection, but also the entire disbursement of the public revenue; rendering strict periodical account, yet with a financial authority greater than had belonged to any statesman since Pericles. He improved the gymnasia and stadia of the city—multiplied the donatives and sacred furniture in the temples—enlarged or constructed anew docks and arsenals—provided a considerable stock of arms and equipments, military as well as naval—and maintained four hundred triremes in a seaworthy condition for the protection of Athenian commerce. In these extensive functions he was never superseded, though Alexander at one time sent to require the surrender of his person, which was refused by the Athenian people. The main cause of his firm hold upon the public mind was his known and indisputable pecuniary probity, wherein he was the parallel of Phocion."

The euthanasia of Athens was prevented not so much by the errors or turbulence of her own children as by the general restlessness of the Greeks. The first anti-Macedonian movements arose from Sparta; and with some consistency, since Sparta alone had never acknowledged the autocracy of Alexander. The movements, indeed, being premature and infelicitous, precipitated by a few years the submission of Hellas to Macedonian rule. With a perversity for which it seems impossible to account, Agis the Spartan king selected the spring of 330 B.C., six months only after the victory at Arbela, to declare war against Antipater. Even Demosthenes himself did not sanction this untimely and unfortunate step; and a single battle in Arcadia displayed the weakness of Sparta, and riveted the fetters of Greece.

By their adherence to Lycurgus the Athenians acknowledged the probity of their finance minister: their applause of genius and virtue was marked by their support of Demosthenes against all the arts and influence of the Macedonian party. But after the defeat of Agis, his adversaries believed the moment had arrived for ruining and dishonouring him. An accusation six years old was now revived. In the autumn of 337-336 B.C., Ctesiphon had proposed a crown to Demosthenes, and had obtained for this testimonial of public confidence the preliminary acquiescence of the senate. Æschines had shortly afterwards attacked this proposition as illegal and unconstitutional, but did not then press for a formal trial of the point at issue. In 330, however, the

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hands of the Macedonisers were strengthened by Antipater's victory, and they now solemnly impeached Demosthenes, not on the original indictment, which affected Ctesiphon only in the first instance, but on general charges affecting the orator's own entire public life. The reader needs not to be reminded of the result of this great political controversy: if its importance be measured by the eloquence displayed on both sides, neither the speeches against Verres nor the impeachment of Warren Hastings can compete with the two Athenian "orations on the crown." Mr. Grote concludes his analysis of the defence in the following words:

"The reply of Demosthenes to his rival has an historical value, as a funeral oration of extinct Athenian and Grecian freedom. Six years before, the orator had been appointed by his countrymen to deliver the usual public oration over the warriors slain at Chæronea. That speech is now lost; but it probably touched upon the same topics. Though the sphere of action of every Greek city as well as of every Greek citizen was now cramped and confined by irresistible Macedonian force, there still remained the sentiment of full political freedom and dignity enjoyed during the past—the admiration of ancestors who had once defended it successfully—and the sympathy with leaders who had recently stood forward to uphold it, however unsuccessfully. It is among the most memorable facts in Grecian history, that in spite of the victory of Philip at Chæronea—in spite of the subsequent conquest of Thebes by Alexander, and the danger of Athens after it—in spite of the Asiatic conquests, which had since thrown all Persian force into the hands of the Macedonian king,—the Athenian people could never be persuaded either to repudiate Demosthenes or to disclaim sympathy with his political policy. How much art and ability was employed to induce them to do so by his numerous enemies, the speech of Æschines is enough to teach us. And when we consider how easily the public sicken of schemes which end in misfortune—how great a mental relief is usually obtained by throwing blame on unsuccessful leaders—it would have been no matter of surprise if, in one of the many prosecutions wherein the fame of Demosthenes was involved, the dikasts had given a verdict unfavourable to him. That he always came off acquitted, and even honourably acquitted, is a proof of rare fidelity and steadiness of mind in the Athenians. It is a proof that those noble, patriotic, and Pan-Hellenic sentiments, which we constantly find inculcated in his orations throughout a period of twenty years, had sunk into the minds of his hearers; and that, amidst the many general allegations of corruption against him loudly proclaimed by his enemies, there was no well-ascertained fact which they could substantiate before the dikastery."

This is noble commendation, especially if the age and the circumstances of Athens at the time be borne in mind; since a declining age is seldom capable of great public virtue, and the circumstances might have well encouraged the indolent and the

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venal—no inconsiderable proportion in all political bodies—to offer at once to Macedon the most formidable of its civil opponents. The good fortune of the orator did not, indeed, continue to the end. Exile and death had already marked down their prey. From the charge of bribery by Harpalus Mr. Grote defends Demosthenes, and in our opinion successfully. From the first the orator had been opposed to the fugitive satrap; he had no means of embezzling the money after it had once been impounded in the Acropolis; he had often been impeached for his political conduct, but never hitherto for corruption; and the speeches of his accusers, Dinarchus and Hyperides, are merely invectives, barren of facts and unsupported even by plausible surmises. But so thought not the Athenians at the moment, and Demosthenes was condemned to pay a fine of fifty talents to the treasury. Unable to raise so large a sum—an indirect proof of his innocence—he was imprisoned. After a few days, he managed or was permitted to escape; and passed some months in exile at Trœzen, where, so rumour affirmed, his only consolation was to gaze from sunrise to sunset upon the distant peaks of Hymettus. The unmanly grief of the great Athenian statesman, and his hardly less great Roman rival, in their banishment, has afforded a copious theme for satire and declamation. The former, it is alleged, indulged himself in imprecations against his countrymen: the latter demeaned himself by supplications to men whom both before and after his calamities he denounced as scoundrels and traitors. But beyond the walls of Athens and Rome there was little to attract or comfort either of them, and Demosthenes did not even affect the philosophical consolations of Cicero. The applause of the people, or the hushed attention of the judges, were to him indispensable as light and air; for even the strong man becomes weak when the object for which he lives is withdrawn from his eyes. "Body's death" seemed to both of these great men more tolerable than "body's banishment;" and the calmness with which each of them accepted his doom at the last goes far to acquit them both of pusillanimity. Mr. Grote has omitted from his narrative a story—and we see no reason to question its truth—which is honourable alike to the orator and his opponents. It is said, that immediately after his escape from prison he perceived some well-known members of the Macedonian party following briskly in his track. Concealment was impossible, for his pursuers called to him by name; and it was needless, for they were hurrying to him with money for his journey, and with entreaties to be of good cheer. "How can I be of good cheer," he replied, "since I am quitting a city where my very enemies are better friends than I shall meet with elsewhere!"

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His endurance was not long tried. In the July that followed the decree for his banishment, all Greece was astounded by the news that Alexander was dead. He left no competent heir, for his sons were infants; and he had appointed neither regency nor successor. His acquisitions had not yet had time to coalesce into a solid empire, and even a solid empire extending from the Hyphasis to the Ægean would have been too vast for any but Alexander to wield. It was obvious, or at least highly probable, that the mass of his conquests would dislimb as swiftly as it had been formed; for though both victors and vanquished cheerfully obeyed Alexander, neither of them would accord the same homage to Antipater or Perdiccas. "The Macedonian host," aptly remarked the orator Demades, "resembles the giant Polyphemus, after his eye had been put out by Odysseus." And accordingly Demades, Phocion, and the Macedonian party were disquieted and distrustful; while to Leosthenes, Hyperides, and other orators "on the liberal side," the hour seemed to have arrived for Greece to reclaim her independence.

Demosthenes was still an exile; but, without waiting for his recall, he joined himself to the Athenian envoys who were despatched to the Peloponnesian towns, and seconded them with all the energy of his eloquence in preaching resistance to Macedon. In requital for his services, his countrymen decreed his return, and sent a trireme to fetch him to Piræus. We are enabled to trace nearly every stage of Cicero's triumphant progress from Brundisium to Rome by the light of his own exulting eloquence. For the joy and enthusiasm that greeted Demosthenes on his arrival at Athens, we must copy Plutarch alone. "The archons, the priests, and the entire body of citizens came down to the harbour to welcome his landing, and escorted him to the city. Full of impassioned emotion, Demosthenes poured forth his gratitude for having been allowed to see such a day, and to enjoy a triumph greater even than that which had been conferred on Alcibiades on returning from exile, since it had been granted spontaneously, and not extorted by force. His fine could not be remitted consistently with Athenian custom; but the people passed a vote granting to him fifty talents as superintendent of the periodical sacrifice to Zeus Soter; and his execution of this duty was held equivalent to a liquidation of the fine."

It was a momentary gleam of the sun, which darker clouds were soon to overshadow. Antipater and Craterus were victorious, and with them the Macedonian party in Athens. Demosthenes and his friends were proscribed, and, at the instigation of Demades, condemned to die. The last act of Grecian freedom was rapidly performed, and was more tragic than the consummation of the *Œdipus* or the *Antigone*. Hyperides, with two

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others, fled to Ægina, and took refuge in the temple of Ajax. "No place was sacred;" they were torn away from the horns of the altar, dragged before Antipater, and put to death. A more illustrious prey awaited the hunters in the temple of Poseidon at Calauria. The circumstances of his death are variously recounted; but it is most probable that poison rescued the most illustrious of Athenian statesmen from the dishonours inflicted on his companions:

> "The conquerors could but make a fire of him:
> Demosthenes only overcame himself,
> And no man else had honour by his death."

We now close Mr. Grote's volumes; with some regret that he does not prosecute his narrative to the extinction of the Achæan League. But he has, perhaps, judged wisely, both for the interest of his work and for the completeness of its form, in thus dropping the curtain with the last grand crisis of the drama. With Alexander a new cycle of events begins; with Demosthenes the old order closes. The nation is yet to be born which shall again exhibit to the world such a consummation and such a renascence as were accorded to the race of Hellas.

Art. III.—PICTURES AND PICTURE-CRITICISM.

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There is just now an unwonted stir in the world of fine art. That region of serener air is perturbed with storms, and shaken

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with horrid din of war. The spirit of Strife—not satisfied with arming nation against nation, in north and east—has taken to set artists and art-critics by the ears:

"——— Diespiter
Igni corusco nubila dividens
Plerumque, per purum tonantes
Egit equos volucremque currum."

The collision of jarring schools is fierce in proportion to the normal peacefulness of the combatants. Palettes clash and maulsticks rattle as loud as ever rang shield on shield and lance against lance along a Homeric battle-field. Mr. Ruskin—an Orlando Furioso of art—charges the old masters and the modern academies, pen in one hand, pencil and etching-point in the other. Academicians, in the black armour of *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh* reviewers, make fierce onslaught on Mr. Ruskin. Meanwhile, earnest students, eager buyers, and humble spectators of pictures—the *Achivi* of these delirious kings—look on, puzzled and perplexed between conflicting claims and antagonistic principles, and find no guidance either of their practice, their purchases, or their principles. It is not our intention to descend into this battle of the pictures as an ally of either side, or even, New-Jerseyman fashion, as a combatant "on our own hook." We wish rather to attempt the office of mediator—conscious, as we are, of the lot that usually attends those who bring the olive-branch. But even if it should not be our fate to win a hearing—much more to part the enraged fighters—at least we may pick up off the field some of the truths which each has been hurling at the other, and turn them to better account than stabbing reputations, and bringing down great names, contemporary or classical.

It is true that all evil has its counterpoise. As thunderstorms clear the air, and wars quicken the stagnation and rub off the rust of peace, so the present strife in art has its hopefulness as a sign, and its usefulness as an agent. It shows that there is life both in our painters and our critics of painting, and it quickens for work the pencils of the one and the pens of the other. We never remember a time in which painters of established reputation strove more energetically to justify their fame, in which aspirants for distinction in painting laboured more studiously to win it, or in which worthy efforts in art were more worthily estimated—of course, out of the daily newspapers. But among the innovators whose work has awakened the present strife, the critic preceded the craftsman. Mr. Ruskin's pen was Pre-Raphaelite before the pencils of Rossetti, Hunt, and Millais. These young men invented the name; but Mr. Ruskin might have been their guide to the aims it symbolises, their encourager

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to the effort it describes. The first edition of the first volume of *Modern Painters* appeared, we believe, in 1843;* though we have not a copy accessible to verify the date by. At that time Rossetti, Hunt, and Millais were still students of the Academy. It was not till 1848 that the latter first excited attention by his large picture from the Isabella of Keats—though he had previously sent in a huge conventional canvas of "the Widow's Mite" to the Westminster-Hall competition for painting in oil.† Rossetti's "Education of the Virgin" we remember to have admired, about the same time, in the first so-called "free" exhibition in St. George's Gallery, at Hyde Park Corner. And Mr. Hunt's large composition from the Two Gentlemen of Verona belongs, if we recollect aright, to 1849.

We have no means of knowing how far the early practice of these remarkable young painters was prompted by Mr. Ruskin's first volume.‡ But from dates and internal evidence, we should be inclined to refer it mainly to the influence of that volume, which closed with a piece of advice involving the very essence of Ruskinism. In it he tells our young artists that "they should go to nature in all singleness of heart, and walk with her laboriously and trustingly, having no other thought but how best to penetrate her meaning; rejecting nothing, selecting nothing, and scorning nothing."

Now Mr. Ruskin assuredly was not the first teacher of art who had sent the young artist "to nature." That had been the universal direction of all the lecturers on painting since the foundation of the Academy. But the direction in their mouths had been coupled with stringent cautions. To "select nothing" was the very last precept that would have been ventured on from an academic chair. When the academic professor sent his students to nature, he took care to insist on their first coming to him for spectacles through which to look at her. Selection and combination were urged to the full as much as study of nature. And if the student of our own day, when told to "study nature," turned from the precepts of his teacher to his practice, he found himself in presence of a huge contradiction. Constable stood

* "Eight years ago, on the close of the first volume of *Modern Painters*, I ventured to give the following advice to the young artists of England."—Ruskin's Preface to *Pre-Raphaelitism*, published in 1851.

† This work, remarkable as the production of a boy of some seventeen, is, or was lately, in the possession of Mr. White, Art-publisher, 7 Maddox Street, Bond Street.

‡ We have since learnt, from unquestionable authority, that the original Pre-Raphaelites were not inspired by the first volume of *Modern Painters*. The coincidence in the appearance of the theory, and the adoption of the practice of pure study from nature is all the more remarkable. Mr. Ruskin's words may be used to explain Pre-Raphaelite pictures just as well as if he *had* inspired the painters of them.

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alone in the Academy as the sturdy champion of English landscape—neither gilt by the sun of Claude nor embrowned by the twilight of Gaspar Poussin; and Constable's pictures hung unsold on the walls of his painting-room. Turner was beyond students' comprehension: the reverent wondered, the irreverent scoffed, before his mysterious canvases. Wilson was more Italian than English; Gainsborough was English all over; but both were of the past; and the student, at the outset of his career, is always mainly amenable to contemporary influences.

Mr. Ruskin was the first authoritative writer on art who sent the student to the teaching of nature—*pure et simple*. The scholar was to "select nothing" among the many models that mighty mistress poured out before him. "Selection" was for the master in art, and not for the learner. The faculty of choice—of combination—of reproduction—would grow up in the student according to his strength and humbleness. As the tree was, such would be the fruit—grapes from the vine, wild-plums from the sloe; but some fruit from every tree left to the kindly nursing of air and sun, the wholesome food of dew and rain and juices of the earth. The only influences to be feared were those of gardener and horticulturist; not that these, if wise and humble, might not aid the blossoming of flower and the bearing of tree; but the chances were that the florist might kill all his dahlias in the attempt to produce a blue one, and the arborist be possessed by a Chinese fancy for making potted dwarfs out of the young giants of field or forest.

One great contrast between Academy-lectures and Mr. Ruskin's books could not fail to strike the thoughtful student. His professor talked to him about art, its great masters, their works, and the laws of their working; Mr. Ruskin about nature, its mighty manifestations, their modes, and the causes of them. The former sent him to the gallery and painting-room; the other to the plains, the mountains, the forests, and the sea. The art of the one seemed to divide dominion with nature; the art of the other was sternly called to account as nature's servant and sworn interpreter. In proportion as God's work is vaster and grander than man's, it exercises at once repulsion and attraction on those within the sphere of its influence. It repels by manysidedness and mystery; it attracts by grandeur and completeness. Whatever introduces law into its mighty maze, and furnishes a clue to its inner meaning, increases this attractive power, and diminishes that repulsive force. Mr. Ruskin has, for some fourteen years past, aimed at this with a zeal that has been vouchsafed to few, a knowledge rarely equalled, an eloquence seldom surpassed, and an industry that has never faltered. He has shown the soul underlying the ribs of death in the laws that regulate the deli-

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cate curvatures of the primal granite, the great heart that pulses in the ebbing and flowing of the sea, the love that clothes the meadows with delight, the unity that gives beauty to man and beast, to forest tree and wayside weed. In one word, he has preached God in the physical world, and proclaimed, with a voice of power, that all which we worship in art and love in nature is typical of God's attributes—His infinity, His comprehensiveness, His permanence, justice, energy, and law.

Is it either wonder or pity that such a gospel has found believers—urged as it has been with all the authoritative force of conviction, and all the seductive graces of style—contrasted, moreover, with such chaff and husks as academies have ever set before their learners? Is it any wonder if these disciples have been among the most capable and thoughtful of those who listened to the preacher? But Mr. Ruskin's teaching is preeminently the teaching of scholars. His art-criticism—in so far as it deals with particular schools, masters, and pictures—is the least part of it. His power has been that of a guide to nature. Once introduced to that school—with such a key to the language of its text-books and such discipline of mind and eye as his writings can give—Mr. Ruskin hands over the student to the great volume of the outward world, and bids him read reverently therein, and copy faithfully and submissively from the living emblazonments of its fair and various pages.

Such, as it seems to us, in a broad and general way, is the work which Mr. Ruskin has proposed to himself, and has in great measure achieved. But not from this point of view has he been judged. The *Quarterly* and *Edinburgh* Reviews have opened their pages to two long articles in which Mr. Ruskin is attacked with a fierceness which we had hoped was banished from respectable periodical literature. Throughout these papers he is assailed as an unsound theoriser about art and an untrustworthy critic of pictures. But in neither is there any attempt to estimate him as a guide of art-students to nature. The bitter hostility of both the reviewers to the author of *Modern Painters* may explain their choice of the point of view from which they pass judgment on Mr. Ruskin's teaching. As it was their aim to wound, they have selected the enemy's weakest points. It must be confessed that the Oxford graduate, in his diffuse and passionate treatment of his theme, lays himself singularly open to attacks which he provokes as much by his unmeasured praise of some painters as by his towering contempt and savage denunciation of others. Totally intent on the immediate subject of his chapter, he scorns any attempt at elaborate reconcilement of assertions which, read separately, contradict each other. The article in the *Edinburgh Review* is a string of such appa-

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rent contradictions, served up with a strong garnish of abuse. The article in the *Quarterly* is evidently by a superior hand, and in it there is an attempt at argument. But the argument is all directed against Mr. Ruskin as a theorist about art; there is no reference to his functions, or his services, as an interpreter of nature—a preacher to the artist of faith in her as the sole mistress—a fervent proclaimer of her great laws, and an eloquent describer of her manifold glories. Now, those who wish to do Mr. Ruskin kindly justice must judge him, not as the *propounder of a theory of art*, but as *the advocate of a particular discipline for the artist*. Of course, if his theory of art be unsound, the unsoundness should be pointed out. If his language about contemporary or classical artists be unmannerly, it deserves rebuke. If his analyses of particular pictures be inaccurate or unfair, his inaccuracy and injustice call for detection and chastisement. If his principles be inconsistent, the inconsistency should be exposed. But when all this is done, Mr. Ruskin's real and characteristic merit still survives. Imperfect theorist, unmannerly judge, fallible picture-critic as he may be, he is still the man whose books have awakened more thought, stimulated more study, and inspired more earnestness in landscape artists and lovers of landscape art than those of any man who has ever written in the English language. But to recognise this service of Mr. Ruskin's did not suit the purpose of the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly* reviewers. They took up their pens, not to judge, but to condemn—not to guide the public to a true and complete appreciation of the writer, but to damage and pain the man. These articles are the latest workings of that old leaven of conventionalism which, in the earlier days of the same periodicals, gave sourness to Gifford's savage condemnation of Keats, and fermented in Jeffrey's contemptuous criticism of Wordsworth. We feel bound to protest, in the name of our craft, against the spirit which prompts such reviewing. It exhibits on the part of the writers the most odious faults which they charge against Mr. Ruskin—malignity, unfairness, irreverence, and impertinence. Having entered this protest against these discreditable papers, we readily admit our agreement with much that is said incidentally in the *Quarterly* about the incompleteness of Ruskin's theory of art, and the unfairness of his way of judging pictures. But when the reviewer is right, Mr. Ruskin is not always wrong. For example, Mr. Ruskin's principle: "that painting or art generally, with all its technicalities, difficulties, and particular ends, is nothing but a noble and expressive language"—had he stopped here, would have been excellent; but when he goes on—"invaluable as the language of thought, but by itself nothing," he says what is neither

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necessary for his subsequent deductions nor true in itself. The very "nobleness and expressiveness" of the language of art, which he has just before admitted, must make it "something" even by itself. The *Quarterly* reviewer's denial of Mr. Ruskin's principle is nothing but an ill-natured vindication of this nobleness and expressiveness of the language of art, with the assertion of which Mr. Ruskin had started. There is a similar crippling of a truth by an unnecessary and inappropriate addition to it in Mr. Ruskin's next assertion, that "he who has learned what is commonly regarded as the whole art of painting—that is, the art of representing any natural object faithfully—has as yet only learned the language by which his thoughts are to be expressed. He has done just as much towards being what we ought to respect as a great painter, as a man who has learned to express himself grammatically and melodiously has towards being a great poet."

On this we would remark first, that we cannot, with the reviewer, detect a sneer in the words "what is commonly regarded as the whole art of painting." To arrive at the perfect representation of natural objects, Mr. Ruskin always maintains to be the very first object of the art-student's education. But when he has got this, he has learned the language by which his thoughts are to be expressed, and in one sense, *is* already a great painter. But if it be false to say with Mr. Ruskin that in art thought is all, and language nothing, it is no less false to maintain, as the reviewer does, that "the painter who speaks the finest language (that is, paints natural objects most truly) must utter the finest ideas." The reviewer, in support of this assertion, compares the great painters with their feeble followers, and asks, what is the distinction between them but the difference in their *language?* But this is fallacious. If we compare different *classes* of painters, we shall find that what makes the distinction between them is the difference of their *thought*. Every one, for example, must feel the gulf that lies between Raphael and Ostade. Yet the latter may be, probably is, the greater master of representation by painting. But Raphael's choice and treatment of subject—his thoughts—combined with such mastery of representation as he possesses, place him on a pinnacle of glory among painters. It is the quality in their works, distinct from mere technical excellence, which lifts up the one painter to the skies, and leaves the other grovelling in the dust.

The unsoundness of Mr. Ruskin's analogy between "painter" and "poet" does not lie where the reviewer looks for it. It arises not from any essential distinction between the arts of painting and poetry, but from the difference in comprehensiveness of the word "painter" and the word "poet." The lan-

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guage of pictures comprehends both the prose and the poetry of pictorial utterance, just as the language of words includes the prose and poetry of literature. The true analogy lies between "picture-speaking man" and "word-speaking man." It is not that Raphael corresponds with a good poet, and Ostade with a bad poet. Raphael is a poet-painter, or painter-poet; Ostade is a prose-painter, or pictorial prosaist. His picture-prose, moreover, is about the very coarsest and humblest subjects; but he is a master of it, such as it is. His description in colour of a Netherlandish beer-house is perfect. Of such scenes Ostade has the fullest right to be called a great painter. But Mr. Ruskin hates beer-houses. His object being to lift his readers to the poetry of painting—since his own sympathy is entirely with this manifestation of the painter's art—he chooses to confine the qualification of "great painter" to the poets of painting. This is arbitrary; but it can never mislead any honest reader of his volumes. Throughout them the imperfectness of his sympathies in art is perfectly apparent. It is not merely that he does not care for the prose-painting of the Dutch and later Flemish schools; he seems even by idiosyncrasy shut out, in a great measure, from genuine feeling for all but one description of picture-poetry,—that, namely, which deals with inanimate nature. When he admires Tintoret and Titian, it appears to be more for the broad and solemn grandeur of their landscape backgrounds, or the minute finish of their foreground details of grass and flower, than for the expression of character in the heads, or the perfection of life in the figures. Thus, in praising Titian's Ariadne, he will turn from the drunken rollick of the Fauns, or the swinging leap of Bacchus from his car, to dwell fondly on the finish of the campanula and iris-petals hid in a shadowed corner of the foreground.

It may be urged, in defence of this onesidedness, that his book professes to be one about landscape. It is dedicated to "the Landscape Artists of England." This is so. But the sympathies of the writer determined his choice of subject. The reviewer, in attacking Mr. Ruskin as a false theorist on art considered as a whole, commits the very same injustice as Mr. Ruskin does when he falls foul of Claude and Poussin for the lack of those qualities which these painters, from the constitution of their minds, never could have possessed.

Man, with Mr. Ruskin, is subordinate to the earth he inhabits. Mr. Ruskin nowhere speaks as if he had either much love of men or much hope for them. Most human interests and occupations seem to him trivial, if not base and abominable. Only those faculties and acts of men which relate to worship appear to find a really congenial appreciation from Mr. Ruskin.

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He is ever scornful of common pleasures and material progress, and he exhibits little feeling for the majesty and loveliness of form in man or woman. This incompleteness of sympathy is the great key to the aberrations of Mr. Ruskin. It for ever unfits him for occupying the magisterial chair as a general critic of art. But with incomplete sympathies Mr. Ruskin unites uncommon intensity of feeling, great logical acuteness, singular command of illustration, rare eloquence of style, and a power of concentrating all these on the matter immediately in hand, which raises whatever excellence he may be commending into exclusive importance for the moment, and makes the fault or evil tendency he may be condemning for the time-being the very head and front of all offending. This penetrative and illustrative faculty, exerted, as it is wont to be, on one thing at a time, throws a light on the object under observation so intense that for the moment nothing else is visible. Such illumination, however, is not like that of the sun, which irradiates at once with its impartial flood of splendour the whole visible round of objects. It may be likened rather to the ray of the electric light, so sharply defined that all beyond its pencil falls into depth of darkness, while the narrow spot on which it impinges, and the straight path in which it travels, are white with a brightness not their own. As you turn the lantern, this pencil shifts its direction without waning of its radiance, and so may be made to light up in turn every part of every object within its range of illumination. It may thus in time show all that is round about us; but to get our complete view we must take into account all the successive illuminations of the narrow and unwavering beam. This explains those seeming inconsistencies in Mr. Ruskin's teaching of which the *Edinburgh* reviewer makes such triumphant use. Each apparently inconsistent statement is but that side of the truth on which Mr. Ruskin's mind was concentrated for the moment. For example—the recommendation to the architectural workman which the reviewer quotes from *The Seven Lamps of Architecture*, to "cut one or two shafts out of a porphyry, whose preciousness those only know who would desire it to be so used; add another month's labour to the undercutting of a few capitals, whose delicacy will not be seen nor loved by one beholder out of ten thousand; *see that the simplest masonry of the edifice be perfect and substantial*; and, to those who regard such things, their virtues will be clear and impressive"—read as part of the chapter on "*the Lamp of Sacrifice*" in which it occurs—is in no way inconsistent with the condemnation of finish for the mere sake of smoothness, delicacy, or fineness, in pictorial work, quoted from the third volume of *Modern Painters*. Mr. Ruskin every where demands from the painter that finish which con-

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sists in the addition of truth to truth; and the careful undercutting of unseen capitals, the perfection and substantiality of even the simplest masonry, correspond in masons' or stonecutters' work to this delicate accumulation of truths on the part of the painter.* So, again, the reviewer finds inconsistency in the statement that "the trunks and boughs of trees are under as stern anatomical law as the limbs of an animal," compared with the insisting on "the character of unexpectedness" in trees enforced by the assertion that "a bough is never rightly drawn if it is not wayward." But no one who has read the chapter on "Truth of Vegetation," in the first volume of *Modern Painters*, can have any difficulty in distinguishing between the unchangeableness of the general principles of tree-growth, and the peculiarity and unexpectedness with which these general principles manifest themselves. We might multiply examples of this apparent inconsistency,—which is obviously none, even to careless readers of Mr. Ruskin;—but that our object is less to set Mr. Ruskin right as against his reviewers, than to estimate him fairly for ourselves and our readers.

Now, to help us in forming this estimate, it is important to bear in mind, that if, on the one hand, his incompleteness of sympathy with men and men's doings injuriously narrows the field within which alone he will allow art to work, so, on the other, the intensity and entireness of his sympathy with inanimate nature renders him unjust and contemptuous towards the old masters for the imperfect and partial way in which they have represented her. Measured by the vast variety of aspects in which the outward world shows itself under different conditions of light, climate, seasons, and weather, Claude and

* No candid reader of Mr. Ruskin can possibly confound the finish he praises with the finish he condemns. But he has himself pointed out how and why his teaching on this point is liable to the attacks of such men as his critic in the *Edinburgh Review*. "It is a misfortune for all honest critics that hardly any quality of art is independently to be praised, and without reference to the motive from which it resulted and the place in which it appears; so that no principle can be simply enforced but it shall seem to countenance a vice; while the work of qualification and explanation both weakens the force of what is said, and is not perhaps always likely to be with patience received: so also those who desire to misunderstand or oppose have it always in their power to become obtuse listeners or specious opponents. Thus I hardly dare insist on the virtue of completion, lest I should be supposed a defender of Wouvermans or Gerard Dow; neither can I adequately praise the power of Tintoret, without fearing to be thought adverse to Holbein or Perugino. The fact is, that both finish and impetuosity, specific minuteness or large abstraction, may be the signs of passion or its reverse; may result from affection or indifference, intellect or dullness. Some men finish from intense love of the beautiful in the smallest parts of what they do; others in pure incapability of comprehending any thing but parts; others to show their dexterity with the brush and prove expenditure of time. . . . Now both the finish and incompleteness are right, where they are the signs of passion or of thought; both are wrong—and I think the finish the more contemptible of the two—when they cease to be so."—*Modern Painters*, vol. i. p. 81.

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Poussin, and all who followed them, may well be stigmatised as poor and paltry interpreters of nature. Mr. Ruskin throws off (*Modern Painters*, vol. i. p. 259), as none but himself can do, six magnificent pen-pictures of Morning on the Plains, Noon with gathering Storms, Sunset in Tempest, Serene Midnight, and Sunset on the Alps; and asks scornfully, at the close of each, "Has Claude given this?" He might have filled his four volumes with such word-pictures, and asked the same question, as his sweeping hand dashed each gorgeous roll of words off upon the paper, to be answered with the same negative. And yet Claude would not less remain the man who, in art, "first set the sun in heaven." Turner, among landscape-painters, is the natural god of Mr. Ruskin's idolatry, because he has rendered more of the truths of nature, as Mr. Ruskin sees her, than any other landscape-painter; not contenting himself with one achievement,—though it be vast as that which, in Mr. Ruskin's own words, we have just claimed for Claude—not satisfied with having mastered one of nature's harmonies, whether of morning freshness, or midday calm, or afternoon repose, or twilight solemnity—but going on from truth to truth, from revelation to revelation, from victory to victory, from strength to strength; each work done made the stepping-stone to some new insight, each mystery solved the key to unlock some deeper mystery of cloud or sunlight, of valley or mountain, of earth or sea or sky.

It is this vast *range* of Turner's art which seems mainly to have led Mr. Ruskin to set him so high above all his fellows. None can honestly deny Turner this merit, or refuse him the lofty throne which by virtue of it he occupies among the great in art. Many will dispute his possession of that intense instinctive insight into the truths of nature, of which Mr. Ruskin finds evidence in his works. Few, however, are so qualified as Mr. Ruskin to weigh such evidence; certainly not one has ever marshalled it so lucidly or stated it so eloquently. Indeed, it is as a guide to inanimate nature, and not as a coryphæus of art in the general sense, that we insist on the admirable qualifications and general trustworthiness of Mr. Ruskin. When he deals canonisation and condemnation on artists past and present, he becomes often harsh, bitter, and onesided, as all who occupy themselves with judging are apt to be: when he passes sentence on pictures, he as often shows his own peculiarities of taste and temper as the merits or demerits of the painter at his bar, and thus provokes protest quite as frequently as he induces submission to his verdict.

When we attempt to estimate the effect of Mr. Ruskin's teaching on contemporary art, we must set off his knowledge and love of nature, combined with his power of stating and illustrating her laws, against this too frequent injustice as a judge

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and this fallibility as a critic. The sum and substance of that teaching are set forth in the pamphlet published by him in 1851, under the title of *Pre-Raphaelitism*. All he says of the vices of modern art, and of the chances and means of its redemption, in this little treatise appears to us admirable as far as it goes. But even here it is landscape art which exclusively furnishes the subject of his remarks and the material for his illustrations. Effort and pretension, Mr. Ruskin argues in "Pre-Raphaelitism," are stamped on most of the intellectual productions of the day. Men strive to do great or clever things by immense struggles; whereas no great intellectual thing was ever done by great efforts. A great thing can only be done by a great man; and he does it without effort. Not that genius dispenses with the need of work: a man of genius is always more ready to work than other people; he is very apt to ascribe all his capacity to his work. In the arts genius is commonly self-conscious; "but in every field it will always be distinguished by its perpetual, steady, well-directed, happy, and faithful labour, in accumulating and disciplining its powers, as well as by its gigantic incommunicable facility in exercising them. *Therefore, literally, it is no man's business whether he has genius or not; work he must, whatever he is, but quietly and steadily; and the natural and unforced results of such work will be always the things that God meant him to do, and will be his best. . . . If he be a great man, they will be great things; if a small man, small things; but always, if thus peacefully done, good and right; always, if restlessly and ambitiously done, false, hollow, and despicable.*" Work, then, is to be at once the test and the education of genius. But what is the work for the art-student?—The faithful representation, answers Mr. Ruskin, of the particular kind of subject in which he most delights. What place, then, for imagination and invention, for poetical power, or love of ideal beauty?—The highest, that which these only can attain when used in the cause and with the aid of truth. Wherever imagination and sentiment are, they will either show themselves without forcing, or if capable of artificial development, the kind of training which a school of accurate literal representation would give them would be the best they could receive. A poet on canvas is the same thing essentially as a poet in song. But who thinks of producing poets by any kind of general recipe or method of cultivation? If we see a nascent glimmer of the divine spark in a boy, do we, if we are wise, forbid him quiet, steady, rational labour, set him spinning crudities out of his boyish brains, and give him laws of versification to study? What would be likely to come of his gifts if we so treated him—unless they were so gigantic as to break through all our snares—but utter inanity and spuriousness? To make the greatest poet of

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one born with the poet's gifts, we must educate the whole intellect into general strength, and all the affections into warmth and honesty, and look to heaven for the rest. But it being required to produce a poet on canvas, what is our way of setting to work? —"We begin, in all probability, by telling the youth of fifteen or sixteen that nature is full of faults, and that he is to improve her; but that Raphael is perfection, and that the more he copies Raphael the better; that, after much copying of Raphael, he is to try what he can do himself in a Raphaelesque but yet original manner—that is to say, he is to try to do something very clever, all out of his own head, but yet this clever something is to be properly subjected to Raphaelesque rules, is to have a principal light occupying one-seventh of its space, and a principal shadow occupying one-third of the same; that no two people's heads in the picture are to be turned the same way, and that all the personages represented are to possess ideal beauty of the highest order, which ideal beauty consists partly in a Greek outline of nose, partly in proportion expressible in decimal fractions between the lips and chin; but partly also in that degree of improvement which the youth of sixteen is to bestow upon God's work in general. This, I say, is the kind of teaching which, through various channels, Royal-Academy lecturings, press criticisms, public enthusiasm, and not least by solid weight of gold, we give to our young men. And we wonder we have no painters!" This is all excellent, if there be any such Academy-teaching as Mr. Ruskin here describes. To us it reads rather like a caricature of any Academy-teaching we have ever heard of.* But for the counter-lesson:

"What greatness any among us is capable of will be attained by beginning, in all quietness and hopefulness, to use whatever powers we may possess *to represent the things around us as we see and feel them; trusting to the close of life to give the perfect crown to the course of its labours, and knowing assuredly that the determination of the degree in which watchfulness is to be exalted into invention rests with a higher will than our own.*"

The passage in italics contains what we conceive to be the very key-stone of all Mr. Ruskin's teaching. It seems a simple truth, and the Quarterly Reviewers are very angry that Ruskin should either claim or obtain credit for originality in its discovery and setting forth. But may not this same thing be said in the case of all great reformers? Would they be reformers unless they preached truths so old and self-evident to congenial minds, when once set before them, that the conviction they carry home is immediate

* The last voice from the Academy, on the study of Art, certainly speaks words very unlike these. We refer to Mr. Leslie's modest and sensible Handbook for young Artists.

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as it is irresistible? Luther preached no new doctrines, only old ones which every body had lost sight of; truths so trite that, as Coleridge says, "they lay bedridden in the soul side by side with the greatest errors." At all events, Mr. Ruskin's truth is *the* truth which the spirit and tendency of these times called for; and the force and felicity of style and variety of knowledge with which it has been urged by the Oxford graduate entitle him fairly to be called the Luther of painting. He is the asserter of that individualism which is in art what private judgment is in theology; and he has risen up against the popes and doctors of painting, as the Wittemberg monk rose up against the popes and doctors of the Church. He has already received the honours of persecution; and if some ancient academicians and connoisseurs had the aid of the secular arm to put down art-heresy, we might see the bulky volumes of *Modern Painters* blazing in Trafalgar Square, with Mr. Ruskin perhaps beside the pile, in a san-benito of Pre-Raphaelite canvases, waiting his turn to feed the faggots.

We have admitted that Mr. Ruskin's sympathies are singularly imperfect, that his self-contradictions are not unimportant —though most of the examples cited as such are not self-contradictions at all—that his judgments of particular artists are often unjust, because delivered from a wrong point of view. But, all this granted, he still remains the most eloquent and thought-awakening writer on nature in its relations with art, and the most potent influencer by the pen of young artists, whom this country can boast. And now let us turn from the doctrine to the disciples. We have summarily indicated what Mr. Ruskin teaches; let us see what those who sit at the feet of Mr. Ruskin have produced.

These disciples are the Pre-Raphaelites, of whose works we have all read and heard and seen so much during the last few years.

The nucleus of this school was a body of young Academy-students, who, between 1843-48, found themselves drawn together by a certain sympathy of tastes and community of aim in art. This body included both painters and sculptors. Its leading spirit was Rossetti. Among its most promising members were J. E. Millais and W. Holman Hunt. The name of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood was not chosen, as has been often alleged, from any determination on the part of these young men to imitate the manner of the painters who preceded Raphael, and to reproduce their stiff draperies, feeble drawing, and meagre colour. But as the great name of Raphael seemed to them to mark the culminating epoch, up to which art was constantly advancing, and from which, after the noonday splendour that goes out from

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the great Tuscan, Roman, and Venetian schools, it as steadily declined, they selected a name which symbolised the upward effort of Raphael's predecessors. This rise of art to its zenith was due, they truly conceived, to the fact that the artists of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in their consciousness of technical shortcomings, were humble and earnest students of nature, striving to the utmost, within the circle of scripture history and saintly legend to which they were confined by the demands of their time, to render the truth of things as they saw it, without thought of themselves, pride in their own dexterity, or sacrifice to the sensualities of their public. With Raphael the academic in art took its rise, and from his time the conventional laws of picture-making encroached more and more on true observation and honest rendering of nature. The Pre-Raphaelites of the nineteenth century hoped, we may presume, by having recourse to nature without academic spectacles, to derive the same benefit from her teaching which had raised the painter's art by a continual ascent from Cimabue to Perugino. To feel as these young men—or rather the guiding minds among them—felt, it is necessary to have under survey the whole cycle of art in some one school. "Here," said an intelligent traveller, looking round the walls of the Accademia delle Belle Arti at Florence,—which show the illustrated history of Tuscan painting from its quaint infancy in Taddeo of Sienna to its mannered and meretricious decrepitude in Carlo Cignani,—"here we begin without art, and end without nature." With such a series before the eye, the upward movement of art to the epoch of Raphael, and its downward movement from his time, are both apparent. The quaintness of the most incomplete fourteenth-century work is delightful, compared with the odious, empty, academic impudence of the huge seventeenth-century canvases; ostentatious of grouping, foreshortening, and school-composition, but void of any spark of earnestness, any faith in facts, any reverence for God or man. But this Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood, it must be remembered, was no herd of ignoramuses united to deny the value of knowledge not possessed by themselves; no clique of blighted and baffled ambitions working together to prove those men of genius whom the public had stamped blockheads; no conspiracy of the lazy, the luxurious, and the light-minded, to kick against the bore of regular work, and set up the delights of a sketching "lark" in the open air against the restraints of a hard day's study from the model in the drawing-school;—they were the most thoughtful, hard-reading, hard-working, of the Academy-students of that time; those who had borne away the most and highest prizes, who were most assiduous in the antique and life schools, and whose performance showed they profited most by their attendance. It is not un-

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likely that in their case, as with most inaugurators of a new faith, some conceit and impatience of authority mingled with their earnestness. A sense of the evil tendencies of academic teaching could only have manifested itself at all in young men; and it was probable, *à priori*, as Mr. Ruskin points out,* that those in whom it found expression would be persons of strong instincts and considerable self-confidence, not to have been at once borne down by the weight of received authority. "Strong instincts are apt to make men strange and rude; self-confidence, however well-founded, to give much of what they do or say the appearance of impertinence.... Suppose this stubbornness and self-trust in a youth labouring in an art of which the executive part is confessedly to be best learnt from masters, and we shall hardly wonder that much of his work has a certain awkwardness and stiffness in it, or that he should be regarded with disfavour by many, even the most temperate, of the judges trained in the system he was breaking through, and with utter contempt and reprobation by the envious and the dull. Consider further that the system to be overthrown was, in the present case, one of which the main characteristic was the pursuit of beauty at the expense of manliness and truth, and it will seem likely *à priori* that the men intended successfully to resist the influence of such a system should be endowed with little natural sense of beauty, and thus rendered dead to the temptation it presented. Summing up these conditions, there is surely little cause for surprise that pictures painted in a temper of resistance by exceedingly young men of stubborn instincts and positive self-trust, and with little natural perception of beauty, should not be calculated at the first glance to win us from works enriched by plagiarism, polished by convention, invested with all the attractiveness of artificial grace, and recommended to our respect by established authority."

And accordingly, at their first appearance, the works of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood were pronounced extremely odd and excessively ugly. There was abundance in them to find the newspaper critics in such ridicule as they could rise to, and to furnish the more old-fashioned academicians with matter for fault-finding and subjects of abuse. But gradually the firm grasp and daring endeavour of these startling attempts told—first, on congenial minds among the painters and the public; and next, on the herd which such minds were sure to influence. The Academy itself has already opened its doors to Millais; and others of the school will probably soon follow where he has entered, unless they turn wilfully aside from the honour. Millais had in a more conspicuous degree than any of his associates the qualities which enforce

* *Pre-Raphaelitism*, p. 23.

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admiration—extraordinary skill in rendering the outward characteristics of objects, invention in incident, true and vivid conception of dramatic expression and action, and a feeling for rich and harmonious colour. No series of works by so young a painter has in our time excited so much well-deserved attention as that which comprises the Huguenot, the Ophelia, the Order of Release, the Rescue, the Autumn Leaves, the Blind Girl, the Peace Restored, and the Enfant du Régiment. Let us recall how much of close and delicate rendering of the forms and colours of earth and air—how much subtle harmony of hue—what strength of chiaroscuro, this series of pictures includes. And, passing from technical qualities, let us summon up again that rapt and dreamy face of Ophelia—those sweet lips, parted in the incoherent death-song, as she sinks, drawn downward among her floating flowers, while the robin pipes, unconscious of that broken heart, in the wild rose-bush by the water-side; the strain of entreaty, not carried too far for loveliness, in the passionate pleading face of the Catholic girl, upturned to her Huguenot lover, and the chequered expression that told such a story in his bent head and rigid figure; the pathos in action of the wounded Highlander, the exultation of the brave young wife, the scrutinising caution of the gaoler, and the infantine beauty of the little one, asleep on its mother's shoulder, with the primroses dropping from its relaxed chubby fingers in the Order of Release; the cool and steady tread of the fireman under his living load, and the rough tenderness of his consignment of the child to the arms of its half-exultant, half-agonised mother, in the Rescue. All these excellencies of the highest order, both of technical skill and of thought, meeting in the work done by one young man within six years, have surely well won Mr. Millais his associateship, and justify us in applying the highest standard to every picture he produces.

We shall return to Millais in our observations on this year's pictures.

We have spoken of him first, as his success has been most signal. Had we been guided by Pre-Raphaelite feeling, we should probably have treated of Rossetti and Hunt before Millais. The former, we believe, was the real founder of the new school. He has exhibited so little, and so irregularly, that his name as yet is hardly known to the public. But those who remember his oil-pictures of the Education of the Virgin, and the Assumption, and those who have seen his water-colour drawings—particularly the series from the *Vita Nuova* of Dante—must have recognised in his works a combination of intense and beautiful expression with a certain wilful uncouthness; a clear Mantegna-like conception of the subject represented, set off by colour

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beautiful in itself, but strange and almost startling in the novelty of its harmonies, which bespeak an original mind trained under unusual influences. Rossetti is the son of a father whose name is identified by all well-read English students of Italian literature with Dante. His edition of the *Divina Commedia*, and his *Spirito Antipapale di Dante*, have set him at the head of a particular school of interpretation of the great Florentine poet. The son's pencil seems to occupy itself with Dante as fondly as the father's pen. His drawing of Giotto painting the portrait of Dante on the walls of the Bargello,—in which Cimabue mounts his ladder to look in kindliness, not without its touch of envy, on the daring work of his pupil, and Guido Cavalcanti leans affectionately over the poet's chair, while below the platform passes the maiden procession, and you read in Dante's eager face that he has heard the voice of Beatrice amidst the chantings—will not easily be forgotten by those who saw it, a few years ago, in the Exhibition of Sketches and Drawings in Pall Mall. A drawing* of Dante led in a dream by Love to the couch on which Beatrice lies dead, while two ladies lovingly cover the quiet face and clasped hands, which Mr. Rossetti has recently finished, has left upon us an impression of mingled power and beauty, of which the best we can say is that they are worthy of the subject.

We hope that these drawings may one day be given to the public by means of etchings. In this way the depth and tenderness of the painter may be rendered, but not his bold and fascinating colour. But we cannot help thinking that Mr. Rossetti should be on his guard against a certain leaning to mediæval quaintness—something very different from mediæval simplicity—which, if not checked, may run into confirmed affectation. We are glad to learn that he is at work on a subject of contemporary life. By his treatment of such subjects we would have every painter tried and judged. We have no fear of the verdict in the case of Rossetti.

Hunt's Light of the World has been selected by Mr.

* Levava gli occhi miei bagnati in pianti,
E vedea, che parean pioggia di manna,
Gli angeli che tornavan suso in cielo;
Ed una nuvoletta avean davanti,
Dopo la qual gridavan tutti: Osanna;
E s' altro avesser detto, a voi dire' lo.
Allor diceva amor: più non ti celo;
Vieni a veder nostra donna che giace.
L'immaginar fallace
Mi condusse a veder mia donna morta;
E quando l'avea scorta,
Vedea che donne la covrian d' un velo,
Ed avea seco umiltà sì verace,
Che parea che dicesse: Io sono in pace.
Vita Nuova, xxiii.

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Ruskin "as the most perfect instance of expressional purpose with technical power which the world has yet produced." This is one of the "strong things" which make Mr. Ruskin's criticism, whether laudatory or damnatory, so offensive to most people. Without endorsing it, we may refer to that picture as a proof of Mr. Hunt's power over the grave, tender, and pathetic in expression, as well as of his rare technical merits of delicate and thoughtful finish. In all Mr. Hunt has done, the qualities of devotional and earnest feeling are visible—qualities too rare in modern art not to be pointed out and prized. We have vividly before us at this moment his Claudio and Isabella—the agonised and cowardly doubt of the man, clutching his fetter in his desperate struggle with the dread of death; and the grave beauty of Isabella, as the conviction of her brother's unworthy fears grows up in her, and she presses her hand on his heart, as if she could impart by the pressure some of her own greatness of soul to the shrinking dastard. There was more expression in that small picture than in any equal space of canvas that we can call to mind.

The first-fruits of Mr. Hunt's recent residence in the East are before the public in the Scapegoat of this year, on which we shall have something to say before the close of this article.

Mr. Anthony, in landscape art, may be classed with the Pre-Raphaelites, for his manly single-handed grappling with nature. His "Beeches and Ferns" will live long in the recollection of all who looked at it with the love of the deep woods in their hearts; and so will many a picture from the same hand, deep in the gloom of Welsh glens, or green with the luxuriant leafage of English river-banks and meadows.

John Lewis is no Pre-Raphaelite in order of time. He was a bearded man before they had emerged from pinafores. But his work has the Pre-Raphaelite quality of precise and unmistakable rendering of objects, without shrinking from any intricacy of detail, or succumbing to any demands of labour.

Our brief notices of the chiefs of the school may serve as an introduction to what we have to say of the general character of its works, their peculiar merits and besetting faults.

Like all innovators, these young men have had indiscriminate applauders and indiscriminate assailants: the former have looked only at the earnestness of their works, their careful and delicate representation of objects, their rejection of threadbare technicalities in light and shade, composition, and juxtaposition of colours, their determined aim at expression, their visible recognition of some duty in the artist distinct from mere eye-pleasing: the latter have seen only parade of labour, multiplication of superfluous detail, want of gradation in colour, over-sharpness

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in form of distances, and absence of all beauty in feature and form.

By putting together the points selected for praise and those pitched upon for blame, we may arrive at a fair estimate of the general character of Pre-Raphaelite work. The best examples of it show most positively the merits above enumerated, and are least deformed by the faults; some examples have hardly any of the faults, others are all but entirely wanting in the merits.

But, in judging these pictures, one thing should never be lost sight of. The school is as yet but an infant school. Not a man of the original brotherhood, we should suppose, is thirty years old. Their pictures are the works, not of consummate masters, but of hard-working, ever-advancing students of an academy in which pupilage can scarce be said to end unless with life. But though the learner who sits at the feet of nature will find his hair gray and his eye dim ere he has ceased to be but as a little child in knowledge, he is sure to have gone on progressively in his power of rendering outward facts.

By dint of making out, he will learn to indicate surely and rapidly. By force of throwing his utmost power into every inch of his picture, he will learn where his strength lies and where his weakness, and how to apply that strength and weakness according to the dignity or humbleness of the work to be done. And with this knowledge will grow up unconsciously the power of truly estimating the importance of parts, and their necessary subordination for the making up of a whole. The attempt to put in all he sees in the nature he is studying will gradually teach him to separate what is essential for the conveyance of a true idea, and what may and must be left out in order that the true idea may be conveyed. At present, as natural among honest learners, effort and excess are visible in all the Pre-Raphaelites do. Mr. Ruskin says, "they are working too hard." We do not see how but by downright hard work they are to reach the goal he points out to them. We accept the effort, the stiffness, the over-marking, the ungracefulness, which we see in most Pre-Raphaelite works, as inevitable deficiencies of the learner's hand and eye. They will disappear as the student rises gradually into the master. But we should be unwilling to think that any of these young men yet conceives of himself as more than a humble scholar.

Such as they are, however, they have for the present determined the bias of the English school of painting.

When we say English school, however, we are rather misusing language. There have been fashions in English painting; but there is not, and never has been, an "English school," in the same sense in which there is an Italian and a Dutch school. There

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has never in England been that transmission of traditions through any apostolic succession of masters which links together Proccacini with Cimabue, or Metzu with Engelbrechsten. As a general rule, English painters do not give instruction to pupils. We see nothing in English art corresponding to what may be seen in France, where men like De la Roche, Coutiere, and Coigniet, open ateliers, in which models are provided, and the students, besides the practice of "the life school," are exercised fortnightly or monthly in composition by means of sketches executed on a subject proposed by the master, and afterwards criticised by him before the assembled *rapins*. Among us the Academy is the only school for the education of art-students which deserves to be mentioned. And in the Academy the lectures are looked upon as altogether secondary to the drawing in the antique and life schools. Thus that individualism which lies at the heart of the Pre-Raphaelite doctrine can develop itself in England unchecked and unreproved. It is this independence of style in English painters, so unlike the sharp divisions into imitators of this or that master traceable all through the French Exhibition, which most strikes French critics of English art. This quality even gives, according to these critics, a peculiar character to all English pictures, which makes them recognisable as English at all times.

"The distinctive characteristics of England," says Théophile Gautier, "are a frank originality, a strong local flavour. She owes nothing to other schools; and the strait of a few leagues which divides her from the Continent seems, by its power of separation, as wide as the Atlantic; invention, taste, drawing, colour, handling, sentiment, all are different. One feels transported into another world, far-distant and quite strange, though one may breakfast in Paris and dine in London on the same day; it is a peculiar art, refined to affectation, odd to a Chinese pitch of oddness, but always aristocratic and gentlemanly, with an elegance of good society and a fashionable grace, of which the *Book of Beauty* and the *Keepsake* offer the completest types. Ancient art it has nothing whatever to do with. An English picture is as modern as one of Balzac's romances; the most advanced civilisation is apparent in it; down to the slightest details—in the shine of the varnish, the preparation of the ground and colours—all is perfect.

"At first sight one is more startled than charmed; but the eye soon gets used to these strange and fascinating scales of tone—to these satiny high-lights—these transparent shadows—these silvery reflected lights—this fresh rumpling of textures—these clouds of muslin—these long spiral curls of shining hair; and through these *coquetteries* may be discovered a delicate sentiment of dumb-show, a rare mastery of arrangement, and philo-

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sophical study of character and physiognomy. Sir Joshua Reynolds and Lawrence, with their broad and strongly-marked treatment, aiming at colour and effect, are no longer the favourite models. Gainsborough and Constable too have had their day; they are admired, but no longer imitated. Wilkie has still some faithful followers; but they are few. The English school of the day is guided by nothing but the humours of its individual members; each allows his own bent to guide him, but without ever losing the British stamp. We shall find, however, a little side-chapel in the church of English painting. At present* it is occupied by only two painters, Hunt and Millais—the one *naïf*, the other realistic—who unite the most genuine merit and the oddest eccentricity."†

M. Gautier would not have written in these terms had he been criticising our Royal-Academy Exhibition this year. He would have seen there that, instead of figuring as a small and isolated sect, the Pre-Raphaelites have gone far to determine the direction of the efforts of all our younger painters. Mr. Ruskin triumphs in this undeniable recognition of Pre-Raphaelite influence. And in so far as Pre-Raphaelitism indicates an honest attempt at rendering of nature, without conscious aim beyond this on the part of students who have no pretension to call themselves masters, the sign is surely a hopeful one. Théophile Gautier, however, speaks of the Pre-Raphaelites not as students of nature only, but as "students of nature with the soul and eyes of the fifteenth century." If by this he means, "with a rejection of the conventional and academic," the Pre-Raphaelites may consider his remark as a compliment. But it can only be partially true. No young student of the present day can really rid himself of the influence of the ancient masters. He is, even in spite of himself, an inheritor of their conquests, and, in some degree, of their conventionalisms. But the Pre-Raphaelites aim at reducing this influence to the narrowest possible limits, and at stemming it whenever it runs counter to the teaching of nature as it appears to the individual student.

Mr. Ruskin has constituted himself annual Minos of the Exhibition: "Esamina le colpe nell' entrata,
Giudica, e manda, secondo che avvenghia."

But this year he seems occupied in assigning places in the pictorial paradise—or purgatory at worst—instead of the original function, by virtue of which

"Quel conoscitor della peccata
Vede qual loco d' inferno è da essa."

* M. Gautier is criticising the European Exhibition of the Fine Arts in the *Grande Exposition* of Paris, 1855.

† *Les Beaux Arts en Europe.* Première Série. Page 7.

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It is a pity, for many reasons, that Mr. Ruskin should have undertaken this ungrateful task—for an ungrateful one it must be, whether his pen be dipped in honey or in gall. He should leave the duty of Exhibition criticism to the newspapers; for it is hardly possible that any criticism of pictures in the Exhibition should be other than unsatisfactory. The great number of works, the inevitable subordination in hanging of every condition to that of size, the jarring between subjects and keys of colour ensuing from the juxtaposition of so many pictures in so small a space,—all conspire to bewilder the critic, to pervert his eye, and to disorder his delicate balance of appreciation. Honest intentions and knowledge of the art, even, will not save him. The effect of these drawbacks on sound judgment is the most charitable explanation of some startling sentences—both of praise and blame—pronounced by Mr. Ruskin this year. But even if sound criticism of pictures in the Exhibition were easier, the critic can hardly fail to inflict more pain by his omissions than pleasure by his observations; and Mr. Ruskin's work is at once too hasty and too brief to serve the public in the way of instruction. The principal use it has been put to this year, so far as we have observed, is to furnish illustrations of the charge of incompetency and partiality in artistic judgment so fiercely urged against Mr. Ruskin. For example, his praise of M. Boutibonne's picture of the Empress Eugénie, as "a really admirable portrait, but for its foggy and slovenly distance—which completed, the work would look almost like life," is really inexplicable unless we may attribute it to Mr. Ruskin's patriotic gallantry towards the pretty wife of our distinguished ally. Nor can the most tolerant reader excuse Mr. Ruskin, for not seasoning extravagant praise by censure obviously and loudly called for, in his notices of certain Pre-Raphaelite pictures. Of Millais' "Peace Concluded," for instance, he says—

> "I thought, some time ago, that this painter was likely to be headed by others of the school; but Titian himself could hardly head him now. This picture is as brilliant in invention as consummate in executive power; both this and Autumn Leaves, 448, will rank in future among the world's best masterpieces; and I see no limit to what the painter may hope in future to achieve. I am not sure whether he may not be destined to surpass all that has yet been done in figure-painting, as Turner did all past landscape."

Now no person conversant with the first principles of drawing can see this picture without remarking the strange disproportion of the female figure—nine heads high at least—or the clumsiness of the child's arm and hand holding out the dove. These glaring defects detract so much from the merit of the work, that even its marvellous quality of light, and the admirableness of its tex-

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tures all through, cannot excuse them in the eyes of the most sympathising of Millais' honest admirers. Mr. Ruskin says he holds minor fault-finding generally useless in the cases of artists who mean well, and are painting from nature. This may be true enough as a general rule, though many will be of opinion that it is a principle which few have oftener violated than Mr. Ruskin. But surely such a mistake,—in a professed follower of nature like Millais,—as the placing the colours of the secondary rainbow in the same order with those of the primary one, demands remark and reprobation. Millais has fallen into this blunder in his "Pity the Blind;" and this may be the reason that Mr. Ruskin has not taken any notice of that picture. So the villanous drawing of the child's bandaged arm, in Millais' "Enfant du Régiment," appears to us a piece of carelessness altogether inexcusable, and such a one as the truest admirers of Millais would least wish to pass over without notice.

And while we are about the disagreeable task of fault-finding, let us express our apprehension that Millais is painting too much, and not well enough. We have never before observed in his work such carelessness and such incorrectness as may be traced in every picture he has sent for exhibition this year, except his "Autumn Leaves." Thus, his Blind Girl is not a blind girl at all. The face is painted from a model with as good a pair of eyes in her head as Mr. Millais. She is evidently the same as the child holding the rake in "Autumn Leaves;" only in the one case she keeps her eyes open for the painter, in the other she shuts them. Now every one who has carefully studied the physiognomy of the blind, is aware that the whole contour of the orbit, and the tissues of the eye itself, are altered by blindness—altered in different degrees and modes, but always altered—and that no seeing person can be made to look really blind by mere drawing down of the eyelids. In a picture, of which the very essence is the forcible inculcation of the sad and hopeless lot of the blind, truth in the delineation of the outward characteristics of blindness was imperatively demanded. Again, the settling of the butterfly on the blind girl's shawl is in itself an improbable incident. The blind are generally restless—in the effort of every part of the body to make up for the deficiency of eyesight. We notice these things with pain; but from a sense of duty to a young artist of great promise, who will cruelly disappoint the most genuine lovers of English art if he fall into slovenliness. With him inaccurate work must be unconscientious, for it is contrary to the faith he has sworn. He may be slight and indicative, instead of detailed and minute; but he is bound within the limits of his finish to be precise and true.

This leniency of Mr. Ruskin to Mr. Millais is the more re-

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markable in contrast with the sternness of his criticism on Mr. Hunt's picture of the Scapegoat. Here he finds fault with the painting of the distant mountains, and of the dying goat in the foreground, without pointing out in what the deficiency consists. We have never travelled in the Holy Land, nor seen a Syrian goat; but we have heard the opinion of a man who for months was a prisoner in those very mountains of Moab which glow in Mr. Hunt's horizon, and who has eaten many a pillau of Syrian goat's flesh; and we heard nothing from him but praise of the wonderful truth with which the painter had rendered the contour and colour of the mountains, and the hair and form of the goat. And this was from a long-practised judge of pictures as well as an Eastern traveller.

But Mr. Ruskin does full justice to the spirit in which Mr. Hunt has set about his work. To all he has said of the painter's earnestness and singleness of purpose we feel it unnecessary to add one word.

Besides artists as conspicuous as John Lewis, Millais, and Hunt, may be mentioned—as striking contributors to the list of Pre-Raphaelite successes this year—Mr. Hughes, in his picture of "April Love," and his series of three subjects from the Isabella of Keats; Mr. Seddon, in his strikingly truthful and unexaggerated Eastern subjects; Mr. Burton, the hitherto unknown painter of "The wounded Cavalier," a work remarkable for its delicately truthful background of wayside-wood, and full of promise in the beauty and expression of the heads; and Mr. Wallis, whose "Chatterton" is one of the most unobtrusively impressive works in this year's Exhibition. Mr. Hook, too, must now take rank among those who can find in English life and nature matter for truthful treatment (without coarseness or commonplace), and for expression beyond Annual prettiness. Mr. Hook was the bond-slave of convention so long as he painted red-legged Venetians of the fifteenth century, with the stock accompaniments of balconies, gondoliers, guitars, and satin petticoats. Since he rose to the reality of English fields, waysides, and seashores, he has become fresh, hearty, and natural in feeling, and has revealed quite an unexpected force of technical skill in painting. In landscape the Exhibition seems to us less rich than usual this year; but, saying nothing for the present of older names, we cannot close this article without a hearty word of praise to the younger Linnell's sweet summer-fields, and to Mr. Anthony's bit of Thames-bank, with its soft sky,

"Rapt in many a rosy change,"

as the sun sets, in glory of evening red, and the moon rises, pearly and pale, above the opposite horizon. But in this picture

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—unfairly hung in the architectural room—there is one of those blunders, so unaccountable in a patient and determined student of nature, such as every thing he has done proves Mr. Anthony to be. How comes he to give us a crescent, when the relative positions of the luminaries of day and night necessary for his peculiar effect can only occur at the time of full moon?

Mr. Hunt's mountain-subject, the "Stream from Llyn-Idwal" is one of the most perfectly rendered passages from nature in the whole Exhibition.

It is not, however, our object to go into detailed criticism of this year's pictures. We must close our article with a few words on a subject for exhausting which volumes would not suffice; viz. the conditions which English life and the practice of exhibition impose on our artists. The evils of exhibition, in particular, are so serious, that we have gradually come to regard our annual picture-shows as about the most pernicious of the many mischievous influences against which the artist and art-critic in this country have to contend. It engenders in the painter a tendency to those extravagances and exaggerations which, in a sale of pictures, are likeliest to attract the attention of a mob of spectators. It provokes the young to mannerism and imitation of every thing that is visibly popular; it confirms the old in faults and bad habits, which are found not to stand in the way of, but to promote, the sale of pictures. In the spectator it fosters habits of superficial consideration and hasty judgment, and, by provoking comparison between pictures never meant to be compared, it leads away from every thing like just estimation. On the other hand, if the Academy Exhibition be a bad school, it is a worse shop. The academicians have the virtual monopoly of the best places—(though this year the hanging, generally speaking, has been most honest)—and any work may at any time be damned to unsaleableness by the carelessness or cruelty of the hanging committee. Few are aware of the degree to which—in the case of young painters at least—the hanging of a picture in the Exhibition affects its marketable value.

At the same time, it is difficult to see how we are to escape from the Exhibition nuisance.

In France the Government can parcel out among distinguished painters the decoration of rooms in palaces or municipal buildings, and of chapels in churches, as well as command works of them for public galleries. All the principal painters of France are at this moment employed in such national decorative work. The Emperor of France seems to aim at putting Paris—as far as the employment of artists goes—on a par with Venice, Florence, and Rome in their palmy days, and of Munich under its late æsthetic king. Whatever we may think

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of the merits of the art thus fostered, we can have no hesitation in admitting that such employment implies a recognition of the higher purposes and nobler functions of painting, which has never been admitted by the governing authority of England, except in the case of the New Houses of Parliament. And even in that case, with what timidity and half-heartedness our Fine-Art Commissioners have gone to work!

Debarred from public or municipal employment—the only substitute possible in this country for the field which the Church opened to the mediæval painter—our artists find themselves forced to cater for private purchasers, and have to choose between the nobler and ignobler way of meeting this condition. Hitherto too many of them have stooped to the easy and gainful success which can be insured by the meretricious, the tricky, and the conventional. The Pre-Raphaelites, as a body, have made a stand for the truth, however naked or unacceptable; and they will in time, no doubt, attain the power of giving us beauty without any sacrifice of truth.

In the touch of common earth lies the secret of all the revivals of strength that art-schools have ever known. It was by going back to nature that Giotto gave life and motion to the swaddled muse of Byzantine art, which was itself but the abortion of ancient art stiffened into conformity with legendary types and fettered by theological rules. It was thus that the naturalists of the Netherlands reanimated the bastard Italico-Flemish school of Bernard van Orly and Michael Coxcie. It was thus that our own Reynolds rose above the effete followers of Lely and Kneller; and that Hogarth some hundred years ago, and Wilkie in our own days, gave, each, a new life to painting.

We can see no hope for modern art but in determined reverence for and faithful rendering of nature. This much is certain. What hope may be for art, thus inspired and thus working, we will not attempt to determine.

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Art. IV.—MR. FROUDE'S HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

History of England, from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth. By James Anthony Froude, M.A., late Fellow of Exeter College, Oxford. 2 vols. London: John W. Parker and Son. 1856.

To define accurately how a perfect history of England should be written in the present day would probably be as difficult and impossible a task as could well occupy the attention of a thinking man. We are, for our own part, inclined to cut the gordian knot by asserting that the age of complete histories of great modern nations is past, and that we must expect henceforward to deal with detailed monographs and summary dissertations. A leading statesman, indeed, by the emphatic manner in which he has proclaimed that the History of England has still to be written, seems inclined to encourage the idea that a goodly row of volumes may yet rejoice our eyes, which, bearing throughout the impress of one great mind, shall take the place which Hume and Smollett held in the confidence of the eighteenth century, and serve at the same time as an unfailing repertory of facts and an exponent of the reflex philosophy of the present age. That such a gifted individual may arise we should be loth utterly to deny; that there is any ordinary probability of his advent we should be equally unwilling to admit. The spirit of the times is decidedly unfavourable to such a phenomenon. The "historic fancies" of the public mind are at present, at least, too self-conflicting to be easily blended in an authoritative canon. We want a microscopic survey of the universe, which can be achieved without interfering with the current business and pleasures of life. We are enamoured of the strange motley complexion of that pageant which we can resuscitate from the records of the past. But we are not satisfied with gazing on the shifting colours with the unquestioning satisfaction of a child; we must analyse them into their primitive elements, resolve their varied combinations, and endeavour to recombine them into some standard of comparison with our own experience. In short, we like to act the critic over the toys of our sensuous imagination, to philosophise with the present, and at the same time follow our ancestors back into the minutiæ of the everyday experience of the past. We wish to know every thing which they did and thought, and not only why they did it and why they thought it, but also what rank their decision entitles them to hold among the conscious and unconscious seers of the nineteenth century, and what share may be

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fairly allotted to them in the working out of the great human problem, with the progress of which up to the present time we flatter ourselves that we are so fortunately acquainted. Happy is it for our theory of history should we stop here, and not saddle ourselves with the additional task of converting this hardly-attained knowledge of the past into a monitor of our present and future career. We want, in fact, in easy combination, a well-indexed dictionary of facts, a judiciously-harmonised gallery of ancient and modern pictures, and a systematised code of political and social morality. While we make these great demands from the historian, we do not give him even the chance of approval which he might derive from unity of opinion and wishes among his censors. We have ceased to have a national creed on the prominent events of our history. We have scarcely even distinct schools of historical faith. We are Harry Wynds in our historical polemics, each fighting for his own hand. While such is our controversial mood, we must content ourselves with more fragmentary productions; and build up from them, each of us for himself, our own conception of what England and Englishmen have been and are likely to become.

The history from the pen of Mr. Froude, with the first two volumes of which we are here presented, requires some such explanatory preface to reconcile us both to its redundancies and its defects. It is, however, a work of such sterling merit, apart from its claims as a model of English writing, that we could easily forgive these errors, were they even greater than they are. Mr. Froude has confined himself in these volumes much more closely than is usually deemed necessary to the events of a very few years of English history; and the minuteness with which he has detailed some occurrences would lead us at the first glance to suppose that he had trodden almost too closely in the footsteps of the general chronicler, and not preserved the due proportion between the space allotted to important and trivial incidents. And yet, on the other hand, the "dictionary-of-reference" theory would be sadly at fault in his pages, and we miss not a little which we should have confidently looked for in a work on such a scale. But the explanation would seem to be, that Mr. Froude has written (as is the case with our best modern historians) with a purpose, a theory, and certain special acquisitions of knowledge; and that it is through the medium of these, and under the limitations which they impose, and the amplifications which they induce, that his history has assumed its present shape. He is avowedly the Protestant historian, and as such naturally lingers longer over those portions of his studies which elucidate that view of the relations of the parties in the great religious controversy which appears to him to have been hitherto neglected. He has in his

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scale of events to consider what has been written out already, and to supply in preference that which has been passed over. He is, therefore, in some measure incapacitated for being the *general* historian, who should run with equal and unbroken pace over the well-worn and the half-discovered facts of his narrative. Mr. Froude's history is thus a monograph, not merely as respects the short time over which it is spread, but also in the special prominence given to certain features of the age, and the complete silence respecting others. Writing, however, *from* himself, he has also written *for* himself; and his errors rather lie in the direction of exclusive adherence to certain sources of information to which his special historical theory assigns a somewhat excessive authority. He has taken up the cause of a most unpopular king, perhaps with a little of the unconscious satisfaction of one who feels guarded by the isolation of his position from being a commonplace copyist of others. There may be, arising from this, some exaggeration of the extent to which his new materials have modified the grounds upon which prior judgments have been formed, and a disposition to consider himself more entirely removed than is actually the case from the arena of common opinion. After all his labours, our knowledge of the facts on which our estimate of the characters and events of that age must be based remains hardly altered in any remarkable particular; and it is in the interpretation of these ascertained facts, in the relative value assigned to particular classes of evidence, and in the inferential reasoning as to motives and justifications, that the novelty and importance of Mr. Froude's history will be found to consist.

As an expression of judgment, the characteristic of these volumes is the favourable view taken of the character of Henry VIII. The author seems disposed to assume very high ground on this point, and virtually to maintain that the character of the whole English nation at this period is bound up with our condemnation or acquittal of their sovereign. He holds them to have been so identified in will as well as in fact with his most strongly impugned actions, that we must consign to infamy along with Henry those men with whose lives we are accustomed to associate the first impulses to the modern prosperity of our country, and the birth and guardianship of the great religious and political revolutions which have given to England her distinctive position among European nations. The dilemma, could it be established, would be a most embarrassing one for those who entertain some little doubt as to the purity of the motives by which King Henry was actuated. Even with what we admit to have been the real fact, there is enough seriously to perplex any one who has been accustomed to draw broad deductions as to

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opinion and character from the association of individuals with particular acts, without stopping to analyse more closely the subtle workings of the human conscience. That Henry VIII. and the Tudors generally moved hand in hand with their people in a very remarkable manner in nearly all their leading actions is a fact evident to any one who has the slightest conversance with that period. That it is a great error to suppose, with Hume and the partisans of the house of Stuart, that the English nation was reduced to a state of abject slavery under the sway of the Tudors, is apparent enough from a hundred incidental intimations of an unimpaired national spirit, and of an undiminished sense of the value of freedom in the body of the nation. We are not, however, prepared to admit that the circumstances under which some of the most canvassed proceedings of Henry's government took place were such as imply more than a tacit and unintelligent or uninterested acquiescence on the part of those who could have interfered with effect, and a timid or biased sanction in the immediate agents, in which the anxious well-meaning casuistry of such men as Cranmer formed as large an ingredient as the interested partisanship and selfish fears of the Howards and Seymours. We are not disposed to exculpate these men, or the nation at large, from all the consequences of their moral cowardice or placid indifference: we only claim for them an exemption from the charge of being in every case principals in the matter, and we protest against the shield of their supposed deliberate opinion being thrown over the personal policy of the king.

We are not among those who take the darkest view of the character and motives of the Tudors, or of Henry in particular. We have no doubt that much of the palliative reasoning which has been lavished on other more popular princes might be urged with far better reason in behalf of that much-abused monarch. There are, besides, certain broad characteristics of the Tudor family which must always excite our strong admiration and respect. We can forgive much, and even be a little credulous in favour of those princes who maintained through such terrible crises the honour and reputation of their country, and whose royal bearing, if it exhibited some of the prejudices, did full justice, at least, to the general feelings of the people, of which they were always proud to consider themselves as the accredited representatives. They lived in an age when the motives of human action lay in such widely divergent directions, that there was more than usual opening and necessity for the exercise of individual judgment on points of immediate and pressing moment. While greater latitude was thus afforded for the intervention of personal passions and individual self-delusions, less time was

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afforded for the counteracting influences of deliberate reason. Circumstances gave the rein to feeling, and spurred it to immediate action. Nothing but the existence in the Tudor family of an instinctive as well as a sagacious caution could have saved us from far more doubtful actions on their part than those which we are now called on to excuse or deplore. Yet it is this very politic caution—coexistent with and curiously blended with their impulsive passions—which renders it so difficult a task to disentangle the web of their motives in particular instances, and to assign their disputable conduct to ungovernable feeling or to deliberate judgment, whether from good or evil premises.

Mr. Froude has placed us in some difficulty in pronouncing on the value of his estimate of Henry VIII. by the course which he has adopted of publishing these two preliminary volumes alone. We have the records of only a few years of Henry's career, placed before us in the light in which Mr. Froude would have us regard them. In the precursor of a new faith this is hardly fair. We are compelled, in justice to our own idea of the connection between fact and fact, and of the light thrown by the clearer evidence as to one set of motives on the more obscure indications as to another, to look at the life of Henry as a whole, and to reason backward from the last actions of his life with greater confidence as to the possible *rationale* of his meridian manhood than we can with our author downwards from the unblemished reputation of his youth. The volumes now before us terminate with the execution of Anne Boleyn and the third marriage of the king. We have still in reserve, within the limits of his domestic relations, an execution, a divorce, and another catastrophe seemingly very imminent in the case of his last wife. Outside this closer circle we have numerous executions, darkening the advancing years of the reign, and by their very frequency inevitably inspiring doubts as to the goodness of the plea in favour of Henry which one or two cases might have been unable to confute. And yet we are held, for all this important part of the evidence, under the terrors of some forthcoming vindication, either from new facts or new deductions from facts, which, after our present experience of Mr. Froude's ability and ingenuity, we are not inclined lightly to disregard. In our conclusions, therefore, so far as they touch on our author's unpublished case, we would be understood to speak with less confidence; but in this also we are bound, after the choice of ground which he has himself deliberately made, not to shrink from introducing our present knowledge and impressions as elements of our judgment.

The fall of Wolsey, and the separation of the English Church from its connection with Rome, are so dependent on the great

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question of the divorce of Catherine of Arragon, that we naturally first turn with some curiosity to see how our author has dealt with his hero-king in that earliest stage of his controversy with modern opinion. We are inclined to scan somewhat curiously the manner in which he treats the memory of the first alleged victim of royal tyranny; and we are bound to admit that there are traces of an earnest desire on his part not to allow his vindication of Henry to interfere with what he considers the due of the unfortunate. This disposition, indeed, is in some other instances, as well as in this, rather overstrained. The reader is so often implored to pity these unfortunate persons, that a suspicion is inspired of almost conscious doubt in the mind of the author that, but for this interposing suggestion, the facts he has detailed would leave a rather stronger sentiment in the unbiased mind of another. The admonition has too much the appearance of a safety-valve for the feelings of the audience; and though we have no doubt that Mr. Froude really has felt compassion, and thought it his duty to feel nothing more, for the weaker party, yet we should be all the more inclined to acquiesce in this limitation of our feelings if we were not so anxiously invited thus to do.

In deciding on the grounds upon which the divorce was accomplished, we are sadly hampered, as in all the great events of this reign, by a dearth of reliable facts, and a considerable obscurity of meaning and uncertainty of interpretation in those which are generally admitted. Indeed, we do not know of any period of history in which difference of opinion among honest inquirers is more possible and probable than the reign of Henry, if looked at separately in its particular stages. We could quite distrust our difference of opinion from a student desirous only of ascertaining the truth, who should arrive at a conclusion favourable to Henry's motives and grounds of action in the cases of Catherine of Arragon, of Anne Boleyn, Catherine Howard, and even, it may be, Anne of Cleves, taken each in itself and without reference to the others. Our knowledge of the great difficulty of deciding on alleged facts, and on the balance of admitted facts, in perhaps each of these instances, would enable us so far to understand the decision at which he had arrived as to hesitate in pronouncing him certainly wrong. But the doubt in every case, which might tell in favour of Henry rather than against him, did the case stand alone, when accumulated through so many instances, leaves on our minds more than a suspicion that in some of these at least the true scales would incline the other way. Nor do the arguments brought forward by Mr. Froude in the case of the divorce of Catherine of Arragon appear to us sufficient in themselves to rebut any such deduction from the general

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succession of events. While seeking to reconcile undeniable facts with his own view of the character of Henry, he has made large admissions, which go far, we think, to undermine his theory. He admits that if the king's sons by Catherine "had lived to grow up around his throne, there is no reason to believe that the peace of his married life would have been interrupted, or that, whatever might have been his private feelings, he would have appeared in the world's eye other than acquiescent in his condition." He admits that Henry's scruples as to the validity of the marriage were first revived by his growing distaste to the person of Catherine, and the disappointment of his hopes of male heirs to the crown. He allows that "Henry was hot and impetuous," and "saw his duty through his wishes;" that "personal feeling can be traced from the first, holding a secondary indeed, but still an influential place among his motives; and exactly so far as he was influenced by it his course was wrong, as the consequence miserably proved." He admits and deplores as a special instance of this, his cruel outrage on Catherine in assigning queenly honours to her rival under the same roof, and while Henry still considered himself undivorced; he confesses that the king "was blind to the want of delicacy in Anne Boleyn, because in his relations with women he was without delicacy himself," and that, "so far as women were concerned," he was without consideration for the feelings of others. In these admissions there is surely sufficient and most plausible explanation of the conduct of Henry in urging the divorce, without our having recourse to the theory of a sudden and intense revival of scruples which had slumbered for twenty years—if, indeed, they had ever existed. There are some other facts, which our author ignores or scarcely alludes to, which strengthen the inference at which we should naturally arrive. Although the first idea of marrying his brother's widow was, of course, started by others, there is clear evidence that before his father's death the desire of the prince himself to bring the matter to pass was so great as to excite the fears of Henry VII. that a clandestine union might take place, and thus his own marriage-project and his leading idea of driving a hard bargain with Ferdinand of Arragon might be seriously interfered with. The order issued by the crafty founder of the house of Tudor that no interviews should be permitted between his son and daughter-in-law, and the rapid manner in which the marriage followed the accession of the young prince to the royal dignity, are indications of something more than a mere conventional marriage into which Henry had been led by others without knowing his own mind. However homely Catherine may have become in later years, there is respectable contemporary evidence that she was any thing but unprepossess-

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ing when the marriage took place, and that strong mutual affection was for several years the main observable point respecting their married life. If passion precipitated the match, there is also a strong presumption that the abatement of this passion, and the growth of another equally strong, led the king to catch at the first plausible pretext for getting rid of a woman of whom he was wearied, and who stood in the way of his political views. The exact date of the return of Anne Boleyn from France, and of her introduction to the English court, is matter of dispute, and Mr. Froude adopts the later, and what we believe to be the less probable date. He allows, however, that she was in England, and at court, in the year 1525. There is said to have been a project of marriage between her and a son of Sir Piers Butler, and this is assigned as the reason of her return to England. This match, however, came to nothing, though we do not know from what cause; and we find Anne Boleyn continuing one of the most conspicuous ornaments of the English court. Here she formed a clandestine attachment to Lord Percy, eldest son of the Earl of Northumberland; but the lovers were separated by royal authority; Anne was sent away from court for a short time; and Lord Percy was hastily married to a daughter of the Earl of Shrewsbury. Soon after the return to court of the disappointed beauty, the attentions of the king himself to her became marked; and we are able to assign a date to these which brings them into curious juxtaposition with the revival of his marriage scruples. From December 1526 to March 1527 (or, according to Lingard, down to the end of April,) a negotiation was proceeding with the court of France for the marriage of the Princess Mary with the French king or one of his sons. It was during the progress of this treaty that, according to Henry's own statement, new vitality was given to his doubts as to the validity of his marriage with Catherine by an objection raised by the French negotiator, the Bishop of Tarbês. There is no reason to believe that this objection applied to more than the strict formality of Pope Julius's dispensation, or was ever seriously urged, or, indeed, brought forward at all, except as a diplomatic *ruse* to induce further concessions on the part of Henry. The treaty was concluded; and before the departure of the ambassadors the English king gave them a grand entertainment at Greenwich on May 5th, at which Henry himself, the French Viscount de Turenne, and six of the principal courtiers, masked as Venetian noblemen, took out severally ladies to dance. "Fusmes chez la royne où l'on dansa," says one of the French suite, in his journal under this date; "et M. de Turaine, par le comandement dudict seigneur roy, dansa avec madame la princesse; *et le roi avec Mistress Boulan, qui a este nourrie en France avecque la*

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feue royne." The well-known scene in Shakespeare will recur to every one's mind; and few persons, we should think, will hesitate to accept the great poet's quietly hinted *rationale* of Henry's conduct in preference to that now urged by Mr. Froude.

> "The fairest hand I ever touch'd! O beauty,
> Till now I never knew thee." *Henry VIII.* act i. sc. iv.
>
> "O, my lord,
> Would it not grieve an able man to leave
> So sweet a bedfellow? But conscience, conscience,—
> O, 'tis a tender place, and I must leave her." *Ibid.* act ii. sc. iii.

From this time the determination of the king's doubts and his courtship of Anne Boleyn went on concurrently, and often in odd combination. Henry, who was an adept at controversial literature, took it into his head to write a book in defence of his new position, and records with satisfaction, in his love-letters to Mistress Anne Boleyn, the progress of his arguments towards demonstration. A great and dangerous public sickness nearly upset the king's newly-formed opinions,—Anne Boleyn was sent down to her father's,—Henry took to devotional exercises along with Catherine,—and there seemed a prospect of relief to the harassed Pontiff. But the sickness disappeared—the king's doubts re-appeared in greater force than ever—Anne Boleyn returned to court—and Catherine was again a deserted wife. The shifting grounds assumed by the king and his ministers in their applications for a divorce—the see-saw between Leviticus and the technical form of the Papal dispensation—and the numerical excess of the reasons by which Henry professed to be led to his present line of conduct—are additional grounds for distrusting the plea of conscience which he put forward. Mr. Froude himself gives expression to a wish that the king had been satisfied with resting his application for a divorce on the dangers likely to attend the succession should it remain dependent on the life and pretensions of the Princess Mary alone; and he blames Queen Catherine more than once for not accepting the proposal made to her by the Papal legate to waive the question, and embrace a religious life. He has omitted to observe, that Henry himself, by lending his sanction and giving publicity to doubts respecting the legitimacy of his only surviving child, had exposed the country to far more serious danger of a disputed succession than any which could have been entailed by things as they previously stood; and that *after* the solemn promulgation of his plea of conscience, Catherine, had she retired as was proposed, must have done so under the stigma of having lived for twenty years in an incestuous marriage, and with a stain upon the birth of her daughter (which an act of legitimation would only render more patent), confirmed in the public eye by this desertion by

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the natural guardian of that daughter's rights. Even if Henry's scruples had been much more certainly conscientious on his part, we should hesitate to condemn the course pursued by Catherine. But with the evidence which we know she possessed, that those scruples had been conjured up, or at least fostered by a desire to place in her seat a younger and more attractive rival, we are compelled to absolve her from all blame in the matter.

The fate of Anne Boleyn forms the natural sequel to the unmerited misfortunes of the queen whom she so grievously injured; and in this portion of his history Mr. Froude has certainly made out a much better *primâ facie* case against the wife, if not in favour of the husband's motives. He seems to us to have proved, at any rate, that Protestant historians have dismissed far too summarily the presumptions of her guilt, and been too ready to impute the accusation solely to a wicked desire on the part of Henry to secure his great object, which had been again frustrated—a male heir to the crown. We cannot, indeed, lay the stress which our author, in accordance with his avowed theory, is disposed to do, on a presumed impossibility, that so many persons, some of them of great eminence, should have become accomplices in an act of judicial murder. Such a step as the arrest and imprisonment of a queen consort was not likely to be taken by the reigning sovereign without his believing or professing to believe that he had good grounds for considering her guilty. In either case, the character of the accused must have been high indeed, and wholly free from suspicion, to induce men, many of them compromised by their own actions, and whose fortunes, if not their lives, were very much at the mercy of the king, to hazard in her behalf any serious opposition to the royal wishes or belief. But, unfortunately, Anne Boleyn's antecedents were not such as to excite any deep distrust of an accusation of the nature of that brought against her. The special allegation of incest, indeed, requires something more than this to induce us to entertain it for a moment. But, on the other hand, the judges of Anne Boleyn must have felt—what we ourselves must feel nearly as strongly—that the sanction given by the king to the mere allegation of such a charge laid him open, should it be pronounced to be wholly unfounded, to the imputation of unwarrantable and interested credulity, or even the graver suspicion of complicity in its fabrication. In the absence of all reliable records of the evidence adduced, we can only judge from a balance of motives; and if Anne Boleyn, on the one hand, is entitled to the benefit of the hesitation which must always be excited by such a terrible accusation, Henry, on his side, should not be deprived of the favourable inference arising from the improbability that he would unnecessarily go out of his way to prefer the

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charge in so black a form. With the case of Catherine of Arragon before our eyes, the courtship of Jane Seymour, and the king's speedy marriage with this new favourite, appear to us by far the worst symptoms as respects Henry's motives. The rapidity of the tragedy is also appalling. The 1st of May saw Anne Boleyn present as usual, with her husband and the court, at a tournament at Greenwich,—her brother, and another who was subsequently accused of adultery with her, being defender and challenger in the pastime;—on the 17th, these two last suffered death on the scaffold;—on the 19th, the unhappy queen herself experienced the same fate;—on the 20th, Henry was married to Jane Seymour. Mr. Froude is anxious to prove that there is no medium between an admission of the guilt of Anne Boleyn and the imputation of deliberate murder to Henry and his council. No doubt, if Anne Boleyn had not a fair trial, her death lies at the door of the king; but it is by no means impossible, in that case, that he may have been under the guidance of blind passion, leading him to see positive guilt where only doubtful surmises of guilt were warrantable, rather than sinning against the clear convictions of his own mind. He must have known that absolute reliance could not be placed in the purity of his wife. We know that some time before there had been a serious misunderstanding between them, and that Anne had applied to the French king to intercede for her with her husband. Such estrangements, when reiterated, as they doubtless were, joined to the failure of a male heir, and combined with the growing ascendency of Jane Seymour, may easily have irritated to a frenzy of impatience and disgust a character such as Henry's, always intolerant of long-continued disappointment, and may have laid him open to the suggestions of interested enemies of the queen, who would have little difficulty in leading him to believe any thing which promised to liberate him from such a distasteful union. That Anne had made many enemies is a known fact, and that her levity (to use no stronger term) laid her open to imputations, if these were likely to be profitable in the market, is equally evident. And if the king once lent his ear to these slanderers, who among his counsellors would have had the moral courage to incur his lasting resentment by suggesting doubts as to the sufficiency of the evidence, and thus destroying his new-born hopes of a dissolution of the marriage? Anne Boleyn may thus have suffered under an unjust inference from the actual evidence, because, irrespective of their nicer consideration, the king had persuaded himself of the truth of the charges in the main, and because in their own minds her judges were not quite satisfied that she was innocent.

But, leaving this painful subject, we turn with pleasure and

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admiration to those chapters of the present history in which Mr. Froude has detailed the beginnings and progress of that remarkable religious revolution which gives to the reign of Henry VIII. its peculiar interest in the eyes of an Englishman. In his first volume, the author, though frequently animated and impressive, fails to give us, on the whole, the impression of one who has thrown himself into his subject with the *abandon* of real enjoyment and sympathy. It would seem as if some of the toils in which the English monarch and nation were still struggling had hampered the free movements of their chronicler. But with the second volume he seems to break through his shackles; and, as if inspired by the change, his style assumes a buoyant character, which it never again entirely loses.

The chapters to which this remark more especially applies are those which record the rise of Protestantism and the first Catholic martyrdoms. Placed by his allegiance to the character of Henry in a somewhat similar position relatively to the two great antagonistic parties to that which the king himself occupied, Mr. Froude possesses the marked advantage of regarding them both through the tranquillising medium of three centuries, and with the increased experience in human relations and motives which the mere lapse of time has ensured. It could hardly be expected that Henry, who, independently of the peculiarities of his own disposition, was compelled to look at the religious movement and counter-movement in so concrete a manner, should be alive to the noble manifestations of the highest Christian spirit which were called forth nearly equally by both. Had the king been all even that Mr. Froude has persuaded himself that he was, the habit of hanging Romanists and burning Protestants, into which (whether guided by state-considerations and a sense of Christian duty, or following the instincts of his own imperious will) he incontrovertibly *did* fall, must have deprived him to a considerable extent of the power of regulating his conduct towards both by any impartial estimate of the good and evil which they severally contained. Indeed, it is the "wholesale" character of this king's severity, which, after all, has created the odium under which his memory labours in modern times. But his historian, writing in a century when the tendency is rather towards the sentimental view of legal and moral offences, yet guarded, at least in this instance, against an excess in that direction by his favourable estimate of Henry's own motives, and having once satisfied his sense of justice to him by the plea of sad necessity, does not think it essential, as has been too much the case with his predecessors in this portion of history, to depreciate all but his own set of martyrs and martyrdoms, but dwells with a proud feeling of national satisfaction on the men on both sides

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who did honour to their common country by their courageous conscientiousness.

"It is well," he says, in one of his most nervous passages, speaking of the first London Protestants,—"it is well to pause and look for a moment at this small band of heroes; for heroes they were, if ever men deserved the name. Unlike the first reformers who had followed Wicliffe, they had no earthly object, emphatically none; and equally unlike them, perhaps, because they had no earthly object, they were all, as I have said, poor men—either students like Tyndal, or artisans and labourers who worked for their own bread, and in tough contact with reality had learnt better than the great and the educated the difference between truth and lies. Wicliffe had royal dukes and noblemen for his supporters—knights and divines among his disciples—a king and a House of Commons looking upon him not without favour. The first Protestants of the sixteenth century had for their king the champion of Holy Church, who had broken a lance with Luther; and a spiritual authority over them alike powerful and imbecile, whose highest conception of Christian virtue was the destruction of those who disobeyed it. The masses of the people were indifferent to a cause which promised them no material advantage; and the Commons of Parliament, while contending with the abuses of the spiritual authorities, were laboriously anxious to wash their hands of heterodoxy. 'In the crime of heresy, thanked be God,' said the bishops in 1529, 'there hath no notable person fallen in our time;' no chief priest, chief ruler, or learned Pharisee—not one. 'Truth it is that certain apostate friars and monks, lewd priests, bankrupt merchants, vagabonds, and lewd idle fellows of corrupt nature, have embraced the abominable and erroneous opinions lately sprung in Germany, and by them have been some seduced in simplicity and ignorance. Against these, if judgment have been exercised according to the laws of the realm, we be without blame. If we have been too remiss or slack, we shall gladly do our duty from henceforth.' Such were the first Protestants in the eyes of their superiors. On one side was wealth, rank, dignity, the weight of authority, the majority of numbers, the prestige of centuries; here too were the phantom legions of superstition and cowardice; and here were all the worthier influences so preeminently English, which lead wise men to shrink from change, and to cling to things established, so long as one stone of them remains upon another. This was the army of conservatism. Opposed to it were a little band of enthusiasts, armed only with truth and fearlessness; 'weak things of the world,' about to do battle in God's name; and it was to be seen whether God or the world was the stronger. They were armed, I say, with the truth. It was that alone which could have given them victory in so unequal a struggle. They had returned to the essential fountain of life; they re-asserted the principle which has lain at the root of all religions, whatever their name or outward form, which once burnt with divine lustre in that Catholicism which was now to pass away, the fundamental axiom of all real life,—that the service which man owes to God is not the service of words or magic forms or cere-

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monies or opinions, but the service of holiness, of purity, of obedience to the everlasting laws of duty.

When I look through the writings of Latimer, the apostle of the English Reformation, when I read the depositions against the martyrs, and the lists of their crimes against the established faith,—I find no opposite schemes of doctrine, no 'plans of salvation,' no positive system of theology which it was held a duty to believe; these things were of later growth, when it became again necessary to clothe the living spirit in a perishable body. I find only an effort to express again the old exhortation of the Wise Man—'Will you hear the beginning and the end of the whole matter? Fear God and keep his commandments; for that is the whole duty of man.'

Had it been possible for mankind to sustain themselves upon this single principle without disguising its simplicity, their history would have been painted in far other colours than those which have so long chequered its surface. This, however, has not been given to us; and perhaps it never will be given. As the soul is clothed in flesh, and only thus is able to perform its functions in this earth, where it is sent to live; as the thought must find a word before it can pass from mind to mind; so every great truth seeks some body, some outward form in which to exhibit its powers. It appears in the world, and men lay hold of it, and represent it to themselves, in histories, in forms of words, in sacramental symbols; and these things, which in their proper nature are but illustrations, stiffen into essential fact, and become part of the reality. So arises in era after era an outward and mortal expression of the inward immortal life; and at once the old struggle begins to repeat itself between the flesh and the spirit, the form and the reality. For a while the lower tendencies are held in check. The meaning of the symbolism is remembered and fresh. It is a living language, pregnant and suggestive. By and by, as the mind passes into other phases, the meaning is forgotten. The language becomes a dead language; and the living robe of life becomes a winding-sheet of corruption. The form is represented as every thing, the spirit as nothing. Obedience is dispensed with. Sin and religion arrange a compromise; and outward observances, or technical inward emotions, are converted into jugglers' tricks, by which men are enabled to enjoy their pleasures and escape the penalties of wrong. Then such religion becomes no religion, but a falsehood; and honourable men turn away from it, and fall back in haste upon the naked elemental life.

This, as I understand it, was the position of the early Protestants."

In a similar feeling of appreciation, Mr. Froude dwells with earnest sympathy on the noble and pure-hearted devotedness of the Charterhouse monks, and especially of their Prior Haughton.

"When this bitter news was no longer doubtful, the prior called the convent together, and gave them notice to prepare for what was coming. They lay already under the shadow of treason; and he anticipated, among other evil consequences of disobedience, the immediate dissolution of the house. Even he, with all his forebodings, was un-

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prepared for the course which would really be taken with them. 'When we were all in great consternation,' writes our author, 'he said to us:

'Very sorry am I, and my heart is heavy, especially for you, my younger friends, of whom I see so many round me. Here you are living in your innocence. The yoke will not be laid on your necks, nor the rod of persecution. But if you are taken hence, and mingle among the Gentiles, you may learn the works of them, and having begun in the spirit, you may be consumed in the flesh. And there may be others among us whose hearts are still infirm. If these mix again with the world, I fear how it may be with them; and what shall I say, and what shall I do, if I cannot save those whom God has trusted to my charge?'

Then all who were present burst into tears, and cried with one voice, 'Let us die together in our integrity, and heaven and earth shall witness for us how unjustly we are cut off.'

The prior answered sadly: 'Would, indeed, that it might be so, that so dying we might live, as living we die; but they will not do to us so great a kindness, nor to themselves so great an injury. Many of you are of noble blood; and what I think they will do is this: me and the elder brethren they will kill; and they will dismiss you that are young into a world which is not for you. *If, therefore, it depend on me alone—if my oath will suffice for the house—I will throw myself for your sakes on the mercy of God. I will make myself anathema; and, to preserve you from these dangers, I will consent to the king's will.* If, however, they have determined otherwise—if they choose to have the consent of us all—the will of God be done. If one death will not avail, we will die all.'

So then, bidding us prepare for the worst, that the Lord when he knocked might find us ready, he desired us to choose each our confessor, and to confess our sins one to another; giving us power to grant each other absolution. The day after he preached a sermon in the chapel on the 59th Psalm,—'O God, thou hast cast us off, thou hast destroyed us;' concluding with the words: 'It is better that we should suffer here a short penance for our faults, than be reserved for the eternal pains of hell hereafter;' and so ending, he turned to us, and bade us all do as we saw him do. Then rising from his place, he went direct to the eldest of the brethren, who was sitting nearest to himself, and kneeling before him, begged his forgiveness for any offence in heart, word, or deed, he might have committed against him. Thence he proceeded to the next, and said the same; and so to the next, through us all, we following him and saying as he did, each from each imploring pardon.'

Thus, with unobtrusive nobleness, did these poor men prepare themselves for their end; not less beautiful in their resolution, not less deserving the everlasting remembrance of mankind, than those three hundred who in the summer morning sate combing their golden hair in the passes of Thermopylæ. We will not regret their cause; there is no cause for which any man can more nobly suffer than to witness

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that it is better for him to die than to speak words which he does not mean.

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But their conduct on the trial, or at least the conduct of Haughton, spared all difficulty in securing a conviction. The judges pressed the prior 'not to show so little wisdom as to maintain his own opinion against the consent of the realm.' He replied, that he had resolved originally to imitate the example of his Master before Herod, and say nothing. 'But since you urge me,' he continued, 'that I may satisfy my own conscience and the consciences of these who are present, I will say, that our opinion, if it might go by the suffrages of men, would have more witnesses than yours. You can produce on your side but the parliament of a single kingdom; I, on mine, have the whole Christian world except that kingdom. Nor have you all even of your own people. The lesser part is with you. The majority, who seem to be with you, do but dissemble to gain favour with their king, or for fear they should lose their honours and their dignities.'

Cromwell asked him of whom he was speaking. 'Of all the good men in the realm,' he replied; 'and when his majesty knows the truth, I know well he will be beyond measure offended with those of his bishops who have given him this counsel.'

'Why,' said another of the judges, 'have you, contrary to the king's authority within the realm, persuaded so many persons as you have done to disobey the king and parliament?'

'I have declared my opinion,' he answered, 'to no man living but to those who came to me in confession, which in discharge of my conscience I could not refuse. But if I did not declare it then, I will declare it now, because I am thereto obliged to God.' He neither looked for mercy nor desired it. A writ was issued for the return of a petty jury the following day. The prisoners were taken back to the Tower, and the next morning were brought again to the bar. Feron and Hale, the two priests whose conversation had been overheard at Sion, were placed on their trial at the same time. The two latter threw themselves on the mercy of the court. A verdict of guilty was returned against the other four. The sentence was for the usual punishment of high treason. Feron was pardoned; I do not find on what account. Hale and the Carthusians were to suffer together. When Haughton heard the sentence, he merely said, 'This is the judgment of the world.'"

With respect to the fate of More and Fisher, their former eminence in the State, and the extent to which other than merely religious considerations entered into and influenced their line of conduct, necessarily produce a more mixed feeling. To any one who is not fortified by our author's rather disputable *rationale* of religious persecution, the previous severity of More towards the Protestant heretics will in some degree diminish the compassion with which his misfortunes might be otherwise regarded. But the special cases of these individual sufferers are unimpor-

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tant, compared with the general question involved in the law under whose enactments they fell. Mr. Froude does not attempt to disguise the dangerous character of the treason-act, which, under the fair excuse of "stopping the tongues of noisy mutinous monks," carried death to the door of every scrupulous though unoffending Englishman. To employ the words of our author's own marginal summary, by the act 26 Henry VIII. cap. 2, "for the better security of the realm, it was enacted, that any person who, by words, writing, or otherwise, deprives the king or queen [at *that* time—Anne Boleyn] of any of their just titles, shall be held guilty of high treason." And this statute, comprehensive as it is, was, he continues, "still further extended by the interpretation of the lawyers. In order to fall under its penalties, it was held not to be necessary that positive guilt should be proved in any one of the offences specified; it was enough if a man refused to give satisfactory answers, when subjected to official examination at the discretion of the king or his ministers: the active consent to the supremacy might be required of any person on whom they pleased to call, under penalty to the recusant of the dreadful death of a traitor." It is but fair, after this, to quote our author's vindication, or rather palliation, of the measure. "So extreme a measure," he observes, "can only be regarded as a remedy for an evil which was also extreme; and as, on the return of quiet times, the parliament made haste to repeal a law which was no longer required, so in the enactment of that law we are bound to believe that they were not betraying English liberties in a spirit of careless complacency, but that they believed truly that the security of the State required unusual precautions. The nation was standing with its sword half-drawn in the face of an armed Europe, and it was no time to permit dissensions in the camp. Toleration is good—but even the best things must abide their opportunity; and although we may regret that in this grand struggle for freedom success could only be won by the aid of measures which bordered on tyranny, yet here also the even hand of justice was but commending the chalice to the lips of those who had made others drink it to the dregs: they only were likely to fall under the treason-act who for centuries had fed the rack and the stake with sufferers for 'opinion.'"

This reasoning may be taken as a fair specimen of the line of defence assumed by our author throughout his volumes on the statutory severity of the Tudors. That there is a colour of truth in it we do not deny. We are indebted to the second and last of the Tudors for our emancipation from a great national thraldom; and we are not disposed to scan too captiously the means which they judged necessary for effecting this end. It is only

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where it seems to us that we discern symptoms of a "tyrannic mood," which was nearly as dangerous in itself as the evil against which it was nominally directed, that we shrink from justifying the policy of the Tudors, and from strictly identifying it with the cause of free England. A measure in itself tyrannical may indeed be tolerated for a time, and justified as a necessary expedient, where its temporary character is clearly deducible from the principles and intentions of those who employ it; but we do not feel ourselves sufficiently convinced of this in the case of the Tudors to regard with complacency the assumption by them of such an engine of power. It is possible, as we have already said, that Mr. Froude may in his succeeding volumes be able to adduce sufficient grounds to justify the numerous tragedies in which Henry was the principal actor; but until this is done, we cannot but condemn the unconstitutional character of such enactments as the treason-act, rendered memorable by victims so illustrious. It is impossible to forget, in our estimate of it in its full development, how completely the circumstances which were now erected into the arbiter of the life or death of Englishmen had followed the doubtful impulses of personal passion and caprice. Of course, here Mr. Froude will join issue with us; and herein lies the practical and prospective importance of the judgment which we pass on the motives of the king in the divorce-case. But, with our present impressions of that matter, we cannot but feel that the alternative offered to such men as More and Fisher, who were above paltering with their consciences, was a cruel and unjustifiable one. It was surely sufficient that they forebore from strictures on measures of which they could not conscientiously approve; nor do we think that the silencing of a few clamorous fanatics need necessarily have entailed on the country a measure which it must have been well foreseen would have such serious consequences. Mr. Froude, who maintains, as we have seen, the theory that the deliberate opinion of the nation, as well as its formal and instrumental sanction, was lent to these proceedings, often lays great stress on the statements of motives which are put forward in the preambles of acts of parliament, as if in them we were always dealing with the real reasons by which the national will was guided. Expressing our general dissent from this doctrine, we cannot but point to the dangerous purpose avowed in the preamble to this particular Act of examining into the secret wishes of "cankered and traitorous hearts." The slanders of Romish monks surely hardly called for a remedy aiming at objects so little overt. The plea of sad necessity, then, does not appear to us efficacious in this instance; though we sympathise with the general idea on which it is based, and are glad to do justice to the honesty which has

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plainly put it forward in so many words, instead of insinuating it over as many pages.

We have dwelt so long on some of the salient points of these volumes, that we have left little space to refer to others which they embrace, nearly, if not quite as important. The ill-feeling towards the clergy in Catholic England which immediately preceded the outburst of the Reformation, and its justification in the profligacy and virtual immunity from punishment of all priests and those whom they could shelter under the "clerical" character, are illustrated by the author at considerable length, chiefly from the records of the ecclesiastical authorities themselves. The following instances are so expressive of the tone of popular opinion in London in those days, that we cannot refrain from quoting the passage in which they are collected:

"Priests were hooted, or 'knocked down into the kennel,' as they walked along the streets; women refused to receive the sacrament from hands which they thought polluted; and the appearance of an apparitor of the courts to serve a process or a citation in a private house was a signal for instant explosion. Violent words were the least which these officials had to fear, and they were fortunate if they escaped so lightly. A stranger had died in a house in St. Dunstan's belonging to a certain John Fleming, and an apparitor had been sent 'to seal his chamber and his goods,' that the church might not lose her dues. John Fleming drove him out, saying loudly unto him, 'Thou shalt seale no door here; go thy way, thou stynkyng knave; ye are but knaves and brybours everych of you.' Thomas Banister, of St. Mary Wolchurch, when a process was served upon him, 'did threaten to slay the apparitor.' 'Thou horson knave,' he said to him, 'without thou tell me who set thee awork to summon me to the court, by Goddis woundes, and by this gold, I shall brake thy head.' A 'waiter at the sign of the Cock,' fell in trouble for saying that 'the sight of a priest did make him sick;' also, 'that he would go sixty miles to indict a priest;' saying also in the presence of many—'horsyn priests, they shall be indicted as many as come to my handeling.' Often the officers found threats convert themselves into acts. The apparitor of the Bishop of London went with a citation into the shop of a mercer of St. Bride's, Henry Clitheroe by name. 'Who does cite me?' asked the mercer. 'Marry, that do I,' answered the apparitor, 'if thou wilt any thing with it;' whereupon, as the apparitor deposeth, the said Henry Clitheroe did hurl at him from off his finger that instrument of his art called the 'thymmelle;' and he, the apparitor, drawing his sword, the said Henry did snatch up his virga (*Anglice*, his yard), and did pursue the apparitor into the public streets, and after multiplying of many blows did break the head of the said apparitor.' These are light matters, but they were straws upon the stream; and such a scene as this which follows reveals the principles on which the courts awarded their judgment. One Richard Hunt was summoned for certain articles implying contempt, and for vilipending his lordship's jurisdiction. Being

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examined, he confessed to the words following: 'That all false matters were bolstered and clokyd in this court of Paul's Cheyne; moreover he called the apparitor, William Middleton, false knave in the full court, and his father's dettes, said he, by means of his mother-in-law and master commissary, be not payd; and this I will abide by that I have now in this place said no more but truth.' Being called on to answer further, he said he would not; and his lordship did therefore excommunicate him. From so brief an entry we cannot tell on which side the justice lay; but at least we can measure the equity of a tribunal which punished complaints against itself with excommunication, and dismissed the confessed incest of a priest with a fine of a few shillings."

The state of things here referred to has its bearing on the much canvassed question of the dissolution of the monasteries. If such were the feelings which the conduct of ecclesiastics inspired in places like London, where they were to some extent under the restraint of public opinion, we might augur far worse things where the seclusion of convent-life in a country-district would lend comparative impunity to crime. Taking this into consideration, we shall be rather surprised to find that, from the accounts of the official visitors, the larger convents came out of the inquisition to which they were subjected, in many instances, tolerably unscathed. It was in the smaller establishments that the evils of the system had their ripest development; and about the suppression of these little difference of opinion will exist, we should think, among candid Catholics. The distinction made by the visitors in their report in favour of certain convents tells (in the absence of any other motives) in behalf of the correctness of their charges against the rest. On this authority, then, it appears that "two-thirds of the monks of England were living in habits which may not be described." Nor, as had been already observed by Mr. Hallam, and is corroborated by the present author, "will the antithesis which we sometimes hear between the charity of the monasteries, which relieved poverty for the love of God, and the worldly harshness of a poor-law, endure inspection. The monasteries, which had been the support of 'valiant beggary,' had long before transferred to the nation the maintenance of the impotent and the deserving." We cannot, therefore, regret the fall of a system fraught with such evils, which had ceased to be necessary to the preservation of learning, and which had itself fallen far below the standard of the age. The disposal of the funds thus accruing is a question less easily decided; though, on the whole, we are disposed to acquiesce in Cranmer's opinion, adopted by our author, in favour of their entire secularisation. "The subsequent history both of the Scotch and English Church," he well remarks, "induces me to believe that neither would have been benefited by the possession

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of larger wealth than was left to them. A purer doctrine has not corrected those careless and questionable habits in the management of property which were exposed by the visitors of 1535. Whether," he continues, with covert sarcasm, "the cause of the phenomenon lies in an indifference to the things of the world, or in the more dubious palliation, that successive incumbents have only a life-interest in their incomes, the experience of three centuries has proved the singular unfitness of spiritual persons for the administration of secular trusts; and we may be grateful that the judgment of the English laity ultimately guided them to this conclusion." The principal drawback at the time to such a decision was the power thus thrown into the hands of the crown. This danger, however, thanks to the peculiar position of the Tudor family, and the spirit of our ancestors in the succeeding century, was happily averted; and looking back upon this and similar deeds of the government of Henry VIII., although we cannot, with Mr. Froude, feel entire confidence in the purity of the motives by which they were actuated, it is impossible that we should be insensible to the substantial benefits which were achieved for us by their sagacious and prudential policy.

Art. V.—THE HARD CHURCH NOVEL.

Perversion; or the Causes and Consequences of Infidelity. A Tale for the Times. Smith, Elder, and Co. 1856.

(By wife of John Conybeare.)

There has recently been a considerable influx into the world of theological speculation, as well from Nonconformist as from Conformist sources, which may fairly be classed together as manifestoes of the *Hard Church*. It is a degradation of the solid, sagacious form of Christianity. In this, its undegraded type, it is sincere, eager, pious, good sense, a little stony, but not without a very valuable function in testing the strength and metal of more sentimental and shadowy schools of thought; this may be called the Church of Common Sense. In its worst type it is a hard arrogant infliction, uniting the tone of a schoolmaster to a spirit of intellectual scorn, essentially a *Hard* Church. We should be very sorry to think that this last type could be found *pure* in many theologians. It has infected with more or less virulence the writings of several. The school itself, however, in its *best* phase, is rather an intellectual than a moral phenomenon. It has contained many able and careful thinkers very far removed from any kind of intolerance, and who would look down

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on the flogging theology with gentle wonder and warm disapprobation. Paley may be said to have founded the school, not only by bequeathing to it a good fixed capital of masterly argument, but, what is more important, by giving the most pronounced example of its *mode* of thought. He, first of all men, as the Cambridge tutor, in the fondness of his admiration, happily expressed it, "had the credit of putting Christianity into a form which could be written out at examinations." To have a compact statement of the whole gist of Christianity is the principal "note" of the Common-Sense Church. Its followers have often, indeed, more or less repudiated Paley—whose temporising ethics are certainly quite separable from his theological system. The argument from design has been frequently recast. Archbishop Whately, one of the ablest and most agreeable writers of the school, has supplied the logic and metaphysics; Mr. Rogers, the most slashing and merciless of its captains, has thrown up defences round the conception of authority, and insulated the region of inspiration; Mr. Isaac Taylor has retouched the Evidences; and Mr. Binney lately addressed to young persons, after Paley's manner, a suggestion "how to make the best of *both* worlds." But, after all, Paley's "case" is but little changed. Its hinging point is the habit of resting the main *stress* of belief on the argument from design, and the miraculous credentials of revelation. And in this all the school agree, from the Aristotelian thinkers, who concede free will and at least the elements of a natural conscience, to the necessarians and utilitarians, who base morals wholly on the positive authority of Revelation. Broad in inclusion, more because it demands but *few* articles of belief than because it is wide in theory, this section of the Church is the resort of the strong-minded theologians, and forms a Court standing midway between the narrow crypts of Low Evangelical doctrine beneath, and the venerable decay of the High Church towers above. *Perversion* is written by a man of this intellectual school; for the time, we will hope *only* for the time, belonging to its morally ossifying type—a man of vigorous and somewhat menacing understanding—not a Broad-Church man, if Hare, and Maurice, and Robertson, are of the Broad Church—latitudinarian, but not Catholic in the tone of his theology—sharp and confident in his logic—given to browbeat his adversary on the spot rather than to going *with* him his mile, or at least up to the utmost point of common conviction—dry and ungenial towards intellectual doubt—a shrewd partisan—an eager assailant of "extremes"—and a champion of that neutral precipitate of Christian theology,—cooling orthodoxy. But let us not confound the theological school with its least favourable specimens.

This branch of the Church Universal takes its stand on

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strong common sense. It sees *primarily* in theology neither a deep philosophy, like Coleridge; nor a response to the heart, like Neander; nor a Divine reconciliation of the many contradictory yearnings of human nature, like Maurice. Its idea of a theological system is a decisive chain of circumstantial evidence, with a result in facts confirmatory of all sagacious views of life. Its aim and effort is to draw up so masterly a statement of these, that you would think yourself a fool to put a business-agency into the hands of a man so insincere or so dense-minded as to withhold his assent. Its great anxiety is to appeal to no strictly individual experience, but to make it "equally conclusive to all beings of equal rationality." And this foundation of its theology in the dry impersonal understanding is exactly that which makes it the feeder of the Hard Church. There is something essentially unsympathising, stiff, rocky in overweening sense; though conscientious charity will often neutralise its effect. It almost consists, indeed, in a power of steadily conceiving men as so many units of crystallised intelligence, representing different interests, but each fixed in its own type, and all like enough to each other to render a wholesale method of treatment the most remunerative. For what *is* common sense, but a keen apprehension of moral probability and necessity, or a quick tact in striking a moral average? And may not a sound sure understanding be best described as that which values the teaching of experience exactly in proportion to the generality of the lessons it illustrates, and which has learned to dismiss rapidly from the mind, as immaterial or practically misleading, all those fluctuating elements of human life which do not seem to be deeply imbedded in the average notions of average men? Is it not, in short, the faculty of attending most closely to that which most often comes before the mind, together with a corresponding *inability* to be lost or absorbed in the special elements of an individual experience?—or a power of generally regulating the judgment according to the force of *numerical* impressions? And in his relations with other men, a man belonging conspicuously to this sensible type gains an instinctive knowledge of what we may fairly call the *inorganic* laws of human thought and action, together with a tendency to ignore the more delicate laws of growth and change in social and individual character. The fixed skeleton-truths of social life which never change in form or composition, but are always alike, at least at the same stage of human history,—such, we mean, as the first principles of economy, of customary morals, the elements of political justice, and the general rules of evidence,—these are always recurring again and again *in the same form* in men's experience, and like inorganic bodies, therefore, their properties become more and more

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familiar with everyday experience. These, therefore, hard sense involuntarily appropriates; and it loves well to discover and rediscover their influence in every department of life. But it will not be so with what we may call the *organic* truths of human character, those which change their shape and twine in and out, undergoing various transformations at different stages of their influence on men. These, really appearing at different times under different aspects, cannot leave the same impress even on the keenest *general* observation, and must reckon as different truths, the real link not being detectable without a special and individual insight which would spoil the judgment for its rough general work. Social truths, or truths of character in their different stages of the stalk, the leaf, the bud, the flower, must really count as different things, not as various aspects of the same thing, to a mind that *ensures* itself, as it were, against the many probable errors of *primâ facie* impressions by the very great number of cases in which it is obliged to act upon them, and in a large majority of which it will hit sufficiently near the mark. Thus, to the mere understanding, *organic* truths, *i. e.* truths of continuous life which have a history and a development of their own, are split up into a number of loose inorganic truths with their links missing. A great number of disconnected *fixed* notions take the place of insight into the gradual and complex growth of slowly maturing life.

It is easy enough to give examples of the kind of affinity for what we have called inorganic views of life that is displayed by the strong understanding trained to deal with average men in average affairs. In politics, for instance, this class of intellect will generally incline to "low" Whig or Radical views of the duty and value of government, and represent rulers not as the head and strength of a nation, but as the happy expedient of a majority to restrain the dangerous dispositions of a minority. Bentham is an extreme case of such a politician. In social politics a mind of this kind is apt to miss the finer bonds which unite class and class, drawing all together into a living whole, and, like the economical school, to see only or chiefly the coarser and more obvious pressure of human need. In choosing a philosophy, it is blind to delicate distinctions, and in danger of explaining the life of the spirit by the analogies of the outward world. And, as we have said, in theology a mind of this nature will conceive religion less as a principle, which has a witness for itself in every secret of the heart—which begins to work in every man as early, and often far more powerfully than his conscience—and which is deeply interwoven with every sacred affection,—than as a compact body of evidence which you ought to be able at any time to thrust bodily upon the understanding,

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thereby proving the existence of a new set of facts calculated to affect its reckoning and to alter its destination.

We do not, therefore, conceive it likely that the Church of mere Common Sense has much of a *literary* mission. As soon as it shall betray any deep capacity to discriminate and cherish the rich varieties of human character, it must *ipso facto* assume some less rigid theological type; the primary Paley stratum would give place to a newer formation and disappear. And that this type of theology must ultimately receive a gracious dissolution, and melt away under the genial influence of literature, we fully believe. Indeed, exceedingly as we dislike that hybrid species of composition of which religious novels almost always consist, we yet believe there is no better sign for the theology of the present day than its disposition to try itself by literary tests. Theology and Literature—the study of God and the study of Man—need to go hand in hand, and are only just beginning to know it. It was not so always. Although it was the return of literature that heralded the free theology of the Reformation, yet in the first era of that theology there was too intense a straining of the newly-recovered sight for the divine love and mercy, to permit any quiet and perfect union between human duties and religious trust. Erasmus and the literary party were also the indifferentist party, who cared for freedom from the Church rather as a release from intellectual restraints than as a permission to love and trust without a priest's artificial intervention. Luther and the Puritans found the only literature they needed in the Bible, and their great yearning was to concede as little hold over themselves to the anxious cares of this life as a Hebrew prophet or a Christian apostle. They desired to drown the memory of human labours in the springs of a divine life; and though they toiled earnestly and loved deeply, it was with a burning thirst for the return of the hour when they might open their hearts to the dews that hang on the twilight of eternity, and be born anew in the healing silence of God. It was not with the affectionate minuteness of joy that human cares and duties were discharged; and human literature was therefore little valued. As the objects of God's love and care, all men were equally precious; as mere human studies, all were equally insignificant. In the one vast thought of free mercy and personal love, all thoughts of the special windings of that love through the varying lives of various men was for a time merged and forgotten. And when the first tide of fresh religious life had rolled away, the new theology, thus separated from special human interests, necessarily tended to become inorganic,—a series of fixed truths as to what God had done, not a revelation of what He was doing.

Literature, on the other hand, set free from the control of

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the Church, ran riot in its liberty, and man's image was reproduced in every modification of distortion, until literary genius was almost habituated to regard new specimens of character with as little relation to any standard of character as if each specimen were an independent species of Nature's own making, which it would be idle to compare with any central type. As it is the tendency of theology without literature to recede into a set of distant, discontinuous, inorganic truths, so it is the tendency of literature without theology to lose all trace of unity, and break up into numberless accidental forms of discoloured humanity. The object of literature is not the mere delineation of actual men; it is the delineation of men drawn with a full insight into *man*. Wherever individual characters are merely copied without reference to any such vision of man,—wherever, for instance, human evil is pictured without the consciousness that it is also human *degradation*,—wherever meanness is painted without any glimpse of its sadness,—there literature becomes grovelling, decrepit, dead; it chokes and nauseates the mind: it is *human* literature no longer. And this insight into what man *is*, and men *might* be, is but too apt to die out of the imagination, if the diversity of living images be not seen in relation to the one life in which they were made. Indeed, it is the natural tendency of mere literary pursuits to weaken the belief in any unchangeable moral standard of character; and, except in cases of the highest conceivable imaginative inspiration, such as Shakespeare's (in whom there was such fulness of humanity, that no familiarity, however close, with the varieties of human weakness and evil could have disturbed his calm insight into the inexhaustible varieties of possible greatness), it is almost inevitable that the habit of taking up all moral and immoral attitudes in turn must dizzy the brain and confound the steadiness of personal convictions, unless there be a real inward hold on that spiritual image, which is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. No theology, of course, however living and true, will lend the artistic power to paint human character vividly, but it will secure the imagination against the dangers of its own flexibility,—it will tinge with a divine pathos the picture of misery and guilt,—it will suggest an inward perspective for grouping the creations of the poet,—and it will involuntarily open new vistas in the tragedy of human story by giving a spiritual transparence to the brooding cloud of calamity, or mixing a watery gleam of unreality with the triumphant sunshine of selfish prosperity. Literature has a right to ask Theology to show that it can assimilate closely with all the various forms of human life, and solve in detail the individual problems of individual lives; Theology has a right to ask literature to show that it aims at some

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unity of spirit amid its diversity of gifts, that it has a higher aim than merely to give birth to

> "Such souls as shards produce, such beetle things
> As only buzz to heaven with evening wings,"

such as only "strike in the dark, offending but by chance,"—and that it will not shrink therefore from connecting the flying tints of human nature by regarding them with conscious reference to the One presence in whom it is *fulness* of life that prevents the possibility of change.

These demands of literature on theology, and of theology on literature, are more and more recognised, and give rise to many unpleasant, because ineffectual, struggles to reconcile irreconcilable forms of life and faith. The only writers who as yet have been completely successful in the task, have been one or two ladies, with characters yielding enough to bend wholly to the high Anglican theory, and intellects sufficiently delicate to inlay plenteously with the stored grains of a rich imaginative experience the painful symptoms of feverish debility which they identify with the highest religious trust. The Anglican works we refer to are painful only because they are so successful; because they really do show what a consumptive air we should have to breathe, what a hectic glow it would constantly be our fate to feel, if the sacerdotal conceptions of the legitimate anxiety of conscience, and the duty of *detecting* a captivity for the will where it does not offer itself, were engrafted on the genial trustfulness of Protestant faith. No other form of faith has yet been able fully to reconcile its practical ideal of life with its spiritual theory. Evangelical stories are mere forms; you see every where that the life consciously or unconsciously believed in, and the life inculcated, are totally distinct; and in the best evangelical biographies, like Chalmers's, all the hearty enjoyment remains distinctly apart from the spiritual grace. Human nature is a "narrow vessel," which has a strong capillary repulsion for the Calvinistic doctrine which it is sometimes compelled to hold, and nature provides for the incompatibility by allowing the doctrine to fill the vessel without any close union at all. Mr. Kingsley has done much to indicate the type of manly religious life in which faith and nature may be fused into a living whole—that true "nature" which alone Bishop Butler recognises as nature at all; but, aiming at something far nobler and healthier than the Anglican school, he has not succeeded so conspicuously in reaching his aim.

Literature has not yet become so fully conscious of the necessity of admitting the religious side of life into its circle of thought as Theology has become of the necessity of testing it-

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self by its general power to enter into and strengthen individual character in those crises of life which literature loves to delineate. Only in our higher poetry has the fusion been perfect and natural. Wordsworth and Tennyson have done much to make men feel that it is all but death to poetry to parcel it off into secular and religious; that to treat nature and life with the large and true insight of a poet at all, you are compelled to recognise at innumerable points the indissoluble relation in which earthly life must for ever stand to both Heaven and Hell. In the other departments of literature the same truth is not yet recognised, and some of our greatest writers still *ignore* religion with a timidity which robs their sphere of thought of its noblest province, and obliges them to be rather painters of manners than painters of men.

In this great want of the day,—the want of a clear insight into the points at which real religion strives, whether successfully or vainly, to enter the hearts and lives of ordinary men,—the Church of Common Sense have not deeply participated. Their acutest and sincerest members are apt to shrug their shoulders at so much fuss about the different aspects of religion in different minds, and to state with some impatience that it is "plainly nothing more" than the strong conviction of "the candid understanding" that the testimony of miracle and history proved Christ to be the Revealed Word of God, coupled with the unselfish dedication of the will to the work of bringing the world to a like faith. 'Of course they know that character is not the same in all, and that in many the affections take the start of the reason; but to them it seems there is little solid reliance to be placed except on an understanding convinced by proofs that do not vary with varying seasons and feelings. However, it is not for them to judge others; and though they cannot but wonder how a rational mind can prefer 'instincts' to evidence, or can fail to see that the rough reason of the world will not be convinced without historical proof; they can only rejoice that some attain the peace of conviction by processes incomprehensible to them, and that others who have not attained that conviction can show so much evidence of practical goodness that they must believe their scepticism is in some mysterious way compatible with God's favour.'

So speak and think the nobler members of the Church of Common Sense. Not so speak and think the exponents of the Hard Church. They seem to have concentrated all their strength on the task of sweeping away the "cobwebs of philosophers," and exhibiting how many counterfeit theologies are in contact with our actual life, instead of finding out the points where true theology breaks in upon those counterfeits. We do not

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depreciate in the least the services of those who expose shams; but we do deeply believe that he does pure harm who delights in "studies" of shams, without bringing them into living relations with the real wants which they pretend to appease. Mr. Carlyle—in spite of his mournfully hopeless no-reply to such wants—has done whatever good he once effected (and it was not small) for the thinkers of England, not by a cold skill in painting shams every where, even where they were not to be seen, but by showing them in sad contrast to the famishing spirits to which they were offered as nourishment. The Hard Church, though they do reserve a private theological solution for the problems of life, are crueller and more useless teachers to those whom they think it their duty to assail. They go about like theological detectives, without any care or compassion for the sins (imaginary or real) of the defaulters they arrest. They "expose" shallowness and weakness, or hypocrisy, in the spirit which seems to say, not only "Here are men deceiving themselves with an imposture," but "Here are men who have no deeper wants, no deeper life that is left unsatisfied by this imposture; here are men who have completely imposed on themselves." They paint, not only the sham *clothing* of men's minds, but sham minds altogether—and give you the impression that God has retained no witness of Himself in the spirits of more than half his children. They even give no sadness to the tone of their delineations. It is coarse triumph over the wretchedness of supposed error or real evil. This is not the style of exposure that makes men look into their own hearts. It is the style that makes men hurl back the charges at their accuser. A section so mischievous as the Hard Church, Christendom does not contain. It is wise and useful to tear away the veil from all imposture, intellectual or spiritual. But it is neither wise nor useful, for it is untrue, to tear away such a veil and show no human nature beneath it, restless under its unreality, and bitterly seeking to dissemble ease.

A more painful specimen of Hard Church libels on men has seldom appeared than the novel of *Perversion*. We do not think that there are many of these sketches that may not be in their literal details taken from real life; many of them clearly are either newspaper facts or sketches of personal experience; but we do not know any one of the miserable shams which pass in such quick succession before us, from the very beginning up to the 121st page of the 3d volume, which, if it had been painted by a man deeply feeling the meaning of what he was delineating, would not have had either far lighter and more mixed colours, or a far sadder tone. The sketches are, most of them, like the ugly series of masks that used to be depicted as a frontispiece to

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the editions of Terence and Plautus,—petrified expressions of folly, vulgarity, and selfishness; and yet many of these are sketched in such a manner, that there must be a general impression carried away that the author sketched them as representatives of whole classes. Either this oppressive author believes that a false or sceptical theology *cannot* be consistent with the presence of God's Spirit in the mind, and is determined that all appearances to the contrary are impositions to be "exposed," or he thinks it desirable to cherish that impression without himself holding it. From the beginning to the end, there is not a sceptic or a misbeliever who is not carefully marked out for ridicule or censure, and generally for disgust. And yet there is such a multitude of caricature anecdotes of all descriptions of impostors, and all descriptions of heretics, that they come and vanish in every chapter, almost in every page. Nor is the exposure confined to the heresies and superstitions. We are at a loss to understand why so much pains should be taken to make men and women of the manufacturing classes seem odious and mean. There is no effort to point out their peculiar moral dangers. They are simply held up to ridicule and disgust.

"When Charles re-entered the drawing-room, he found most of the guests already assembled. That they were natives of Cottonham he perceived by their accent, with which his brother-in-law had already familiarised his ear. He had always hated it, but he now found that its harsh and nasal twang sounded still more unmusical from the throat of the female than from that of the male. He had hardly time to make this hasty generalisation from the sounds around him when dinner was announced.

Charles was particularly presented by his host to a turbaned matron, whose notes had formed the principal element in the above conclusion, as 'my aunt, Mrs. Bridge.' This lady he was instructed to take down to dinner, his brother-in-law apologising to him for not giving him Mrs. Smeythe, on the ground that Mrs. Bridge was so anxious to make his acquaintance. 'And you will have a great deal to say to each other, I am sure,' he added, 'for you both belong to the aristocracy, as I may say.'

In elucidation of this last remark, it should be explained that Mrs. Bridge had been a Miss Smeythe, sister to the defunct manufacturer, who had first disguised his patronymic Smith under that ridiculous metamorphosis. Her father having died early, she became possessed, at nineteen, of a fortune of ten thousand pounds; and on the strength of this inheritance she was married to the owner of a small estate in Blankshire, who lived ten miles from Cottonham.

Mr. Bridge (or 'the Squire,' as his wife delighted to style him) was the grandson of a Cottonham attorney, who had purchased the property in question. It had, therefore, been in the hands of the Bridges for three generations, a length of tenure which sufficed in Blankshire to place its present owner among the landed gentry of the

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neighbourhood, or (to use the phrase which Mrs. Bridge especially affected) among the 'county aristocracy.'

Mrs. Bridge was very attentive to Charles, on whom she looked with immense respect, as himself the head of a 'county family,' and even the lord of a manor, which she considered as a minor species of nobility. She began at once to express her regret that she could not introduce him to her son, who was at present absent from home.

'He is with his regiment in Ireland, Mr. Bampton—the 90th Dragoons, you know. We had some difficulty in getting him into that corps; but I thought it essential that he should be in a really fashionable regiment. You will agree with me, I am sure, that we county families should not send our sons into any other branch of the service, except the Guards or the cavalry.'

Charles replied that he had known several very well-connected men in the regiments of the line; and that those who were anxious to learn their profession would often prefer such regiments in a time of European peace, as being most likely to see service in India or the colonies.

'Ah, well,' she answered, 'it is possible that such a case may occur occasionally; but you will allow that it is the exception. In general, the officers of the line are taken from quite the secondary classes.'

This expression was new to Charles, and delighted him exceedingly; implying, as it did, that the speaker reckoned herself among the 'primary classes.' In order, however, to draw her out, he affected to misunderstand it, and observed that he had not been aware of the classification to which she alluded; he had thought the first-class men at Sandhurst were selected for the engineers and artillery, and not for the cavalry.

'Ah, my dear sir,' cried Mrs. Bridge, 'but I was not speaking of that sort of classes; I allude to the social class to which we belong. You are perhaps aware that my son is the head of a family which belongs to the county aristocracy; and although my two sisters are not quite so highly connected as myself, yet they both of them married carriages.'

She then began to explain to Charles in detail the dignity of the Bridge family, and all their aristocratic connections. One of her sisters-in-law had actually married the cousin of a baronet. Another had been engaged to 'an honourable' (the tenth son of an impoverished Irish peer), who had unfortunately died before they could be married. 'Poor dear Grosvenor,' however, played a large part in Mrs. Bridge's conversation, notwithstanding his premature decease; and she never failed to describe to every new acquaintance how his sister the Lady Mary had actually called on Miss Bridge when staying with herself in London, and had taken her out driving in Hyde Park.

After detailing these collateral glories of her race, she proceeded to give some account of her own daughter, who was at a fashionable boarding-school in London.

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'I have sent her to Miss Tuftem's,' she said, 'because it is the rule there to admit no children of the mercantile classes. I made that quite an absolute point, Mr. Bampton. It is *so* important that girls should form their manners on the best models of *ton* from the very first.'

Charles observed that he thought it must be rather difficult in a mercantile country like England to maintain such an exclusive regulation as that on which she insisted.

'That is very true,' she replied, with a sigh, 'it is indeed difficult, and requires the greatest circumspection; but still it may be done, with care and judgment, my dear sir. That is, it may be done in London. Of course, at Cottonham it would be quite impossible; for, to tell you the truth (and here she whispered), we are sadly overrun by the secondary classes in this neighbourhood.'"

But the sceptics are the author's main chase: and when he has hunted them down, he stamps on them with heavy-heeled boots.

"In one particular, however, Armstrong's mind received a new impulse from the acquaintance he formed at Manchester. The friends of Mr. Dulcimer, senior, belonged to that advanced school of Socinians whose opinions are represented in the *Progressive Review*. They were 'liberal' *par excellence*, had all of them renounced every thing of Christianity but the name, and many of them repudiated the name also, which (they thought) was calculated to create an invidious and superstitious distinction between themselves and gentlemen of the Hebrew persuasion.

Armstrong had been an unbeliever from his boyhood; but hitherto his disbelief had been of a passive character, arising partly from a repugnance to the supernatural element in revelation, and partly from witnessing the contradiction which was exhibited by his father between the highest profession of piety and the most worldly practice; but chiefly from an impatience of the moral restraints imposed by religion. The conversation of his new friends, and the books they lent to him, enabled him to give a reason for his instinctive unbelief, and consolidated his floating doubts into a systematic structure of infidelity. This system, however, was almost wholly negative, for he would by no means assent to the positive creed of his deistical allies, which indeed was itself in a state of perpetual flux, and changed with every new number of the *Progressive Review*. They especially pressed upon him the teaching of their favourite author, Mr. Neulicht, who, after having passed through every known shade of Christian belief, had renounced his faith in revelation, and was at that time in the stage of deism. They assured him that this great author had raised a new and higher spirituality on the ruins of Christian fanaticism, and had established immutable morality on an irrefragable basis. Armstrong read Neulicht's books, but continued unconvinced.

'As to the spirituality you talk of,' he said to his friends, 'it is mere sentimentalism; very good, in its way, for those who have a taste for it; but to me it is simply unintelligible when it rests on no

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external revelation; and I suspect, as Teufelsdröchk says, that it is all so much *bottled moonshine*.'

'Well,' they said, 'but at all events you will acknowledge, even if you deny his natural religion, that he has established the obligation of morality on an immutable basis.'

'I am sorry to differ from you,' said Armstrong, 'and I hope you won't suspect me of any intention to pick your pockets; but I confess that I agree with Bentham in utterly denying the existence of a moral sense. I think it can all be resolved into habit and education. And as to its being immutable, why, not only do civilized nations differ from savages as to what is right and wrong, but even the most enlightened philosophers of the present day are at issue with each other as to the most important questions; they cannot even settle whether pride and revenge are virtues or vices, nor whether slavery and adultery are right or wrong.'

Thus Armstrong argued in public; and in private he added, in a whisper to himself, 'The most conclusive proof to me that there is no such thing as immutable morality is, that, after ridding my mind of the old absurdities in which I was brought up, I feel I have no moral convictions whatever. If conscience were a universal possession, I should have one myself; and I feel quite sure I have none. As to the great moral laws people talk about, they are nothing more than social conventions, established for the general convenience, but violated by superior men whenever it suits their interest.'"

We have no desire to quote more of this kind. We have used strong language, and wish only to justify it to those who have not read the book. Those who have, will know that these are mild specimens of the *throng* of dark and yet hard triumphant representations of vulgarity and wickedness in classes and individuals—High Church, Low Church, heterodox, and sceptical, as well as to a certain extent academic, literary, and commercial—with which the first two volumes are filled. Many of these will certainly be taken, however they were really intended, as meant to be personal or typical; (for example, there is a sentence dragged from its context and quoted from Mr. Jowitt's recent book, which is put into the mouth of a detestable materialist;)—there is no purpose in them otherwise;—the author often breaks as it were by main force the natural thread of the narrative in order to introduce them;—and if they are not meant to fix a definite brand on class-opinions and class-morals, they appear to have no purpose at all. The latter portion of the third volume is of a much better kind, and helps us to feel it possible that, mischievous and directly anti-religious in moral effect as the earlier portion of the book seems to us to be, the writer may nevertheless truly think, in that kind of martial zeal for truth which has too often eclipsed charity, that it is not the "endurance" but the *infliction* of "hardness" which makes "a true soldier of Christ."

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There is no end which a Christian writer can have in view that we hold to be so urgent and sacred as a crusade against the moral atheism of the day, and the resistance to the death of that self-centred philosophy and worship of blind nature which is fostered by the modern idolatries of beauty, and force, and law. But how are we to fight this battle? By admitting that God has lost all influence in the world, except over the holders of true doctrine? By refusing to believe in the signs of the goodness which we see, because it is associated with that which we dislike? Why, it is the intellectual analogue of the massacre of St. Bartholomew. The orthodox Church exterminated the heretics from hopelessness of their conversion. It gave up in despair the task of availing itself of the true doctrine in their hearts to introduce a truer. And this is exactly the intellectual policy of the Hard Church. Instead of rejoicing to indicate the good there is, and bringing out clearly its conflict with that which they regard as evil, they intellectually *ignore* the more hopeful elements that are bound up with scepticism, that they may indulge themselves in more unrestrained ferocity against it. The book we are reviewing is professedly a story of scepticism: and yet the writer is so suicidal—so almost atheistic in the tone of his thought about scepticism—that he exhibits *no one* spiritual struggle against its gradual invasion of the heart throughout the period of the sceptic's descent towards the pit of moral despair. It is made to be a kind of easy development of nature, a sliding down an inclined plane, instead of a darkening of the mind in the face of the protests of the conscience and the yearnings of the heart. In his preface, the writer truly says that unbelief arises from three causes—moral unfaithfulness,—the real weakness of the intellect in attempting to grasp problems so mighty,—and the evil effect of the spurious religion of others on the mind. Yet he never attempts to trace the deepening of the shadows on the hearts of his three sceptics from any one of these causes. He exhibits a ready-made infidel,—a mere devil,—in whom there is no growth of scepticism because there is no descent for one who is already at the bottom. His two other sceptics he puts into very unpleasant society, where there is plenty of spurious religion, and plenty of real flagrant sin, and some very thin discussion of the intellectual difficulties in faith. But he does not attempt to indicate the slightest resistance to these malignant influences in the minds of his hero and heroine. He presents the course of infidelity up to the last crisis as a smooth passage, which every wind and tide of circumstance combine to favour. Could we believe such a history to be a true one, we should quickly become infidels ourselves. Surely a writer of such a tale is bound to present the *interior* history of such a change, and to indicate,

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—if he believes in them,—the natural fear, and doubt, and circumstantial checks by which this drifting into unbelief is retarded. If the process be a *moral* degradation, as no doubt it most often is, we ought to have the picture of the cloud of sin gathering over the spirit, blinding it first to the outward signs of human goodness, then to the subtler individual prompting of conscience, then to the authority of received and customary morality; together with the strife and anguish of such a degradation, the fainter and fainter voices in the vanishing dream, the petrifying of the world into material law, the reckless despair of personal immortality, mixed up, however, with an inexplicable feeling that though the world of life is closing *against* the sceptic, those whom he has loved for their goodness must exist *somewhere* still;—the gradual ceasing to care about God rather than to believe in Him,—the floating memory that there is a whole world of thought on the subject which, however, it would be as idle to enter upon as for the prisoner who has lost count of time to wonder whether day or night is over the world above; —this, and much more than this, should enter into the picture of the growth of moral atheism, if it is to be true. And where the scepticism is not moral,—where, as we believe is often the case, it is due to the natural constitution of a one-sided intellect in a character that, if it had no such twist, might be held to be eminently noble,—then the tale of scepticism should display the war of scientific analogies with the natural faith in moral freedom,—the tenacity of conscience in asserting what the understanding rejects,—the inevitable collision between the seeming revelation of science and the supernaturalism of Christian miracle, —the resistance of the deeper spirit to the scientific metaphysics which would load God himself with adamantine chains of inward necessity, and reduce the universe to a vast mental mechaanism, —and, finally, the healthy influence of moral goodness in practically shaking off this nightmare of an overpowered reason.

The only approach to a picture of this kind in the tale before us is in the description of Clara's suicide, which has power and depth beyond any other part of the book; but elsewhere there is absolutely no attempt to enter into the spiritual struggles of a sceptical intellect yearning for faith, and the whole doctrine of the book goes to assert that no sceptic's life will bear moral scrutiny,—that if God and Christ are not recognised by faith, there must be a moral canker in the heart. The Hard Church prophesies angrily against scepticism, and will not even recognise God's own mark of moral purity if He chooses to affix it to a character that is not countersigned under their own hand. To suspect what God has done, because He has not gone far

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enough for their theory—to alienate goodness by disdainful frowns, because it has not ripened into trust,—is the very impiety of a dogmatism that will not see that all holiness is of God. Can any faith be *real* which is not eager and grateful to recognise that God has done much, when it cannot recognise that God has done all? We have no words to express our intense disapproval and horror of the spirit that rather grumbles because scepticism is not sceptical *enough*, and drives away those amongst the sceptics who cling fervently to the belief in the sinfulness of sin, and the duty of prayer, with a taunt that it would be more *consistent* to embrace a better developed type of infidelity. If there is one sign more hopeful for this century than the last, it is the more Christian *type* of sceptical thought; and unless the application of the Hard Church scourge reduce to a bitter silence the spirit of the higher minds amongst the doubters, we believe it will issue in a general return to Christianity of that class in which Deism and Socialism most prevail, and which in the last age was so deeply infected by the *moral* infidelity of writers like the French Encyclopædists. Can it be a Christian divine who preaches thus?

"I acknowledge, indeed, that if I were to yield myself to the guidance of the speculative understanding, I could not stop short of that system of atheism which it is now the fashion to call pantheism; for I quite agree with you in finding no resting-point in the shallow deism of Theodore Parker or Francis Newman; indeed, I cannot imagine how any one who has read Butler should ever have halted at such a half-way house. But I can feel deeply the attractiveness of Spinoza's creed, or rather of that ancient system of oriental speculation of which Spinoza has been the greatest modern exponent; but to which he added nothing essential that had not been said by Chinese and Indian pantheists three thousand years before him. So far as the mere intellect is concerned, I could embrace that grand idealistic philosophy which identifies the perceived with the perceiver, matter with spirit, and man with God—which represents all physical and all moral phenomena as unalterably determined by antecedent fate—all things but parts of one tremendous whole—all wheels in one vast machine, impelled by irresistible and incomprehensible laws. I could believe (with Fichte) that 'every thing is what it is of absolute necessity, and cannot be other than it is;' or (with Miss Martineau) that 'I am as completely the result of my nature, and impelled to do what I do, as the needle to point to the north, or the puppet to move according as the string is pulled.' And I could proceed (with Emerson) to identify good with evil, and could quote Goethe to prove the idleness of wishing to jump off one's shadow.

But when the understanding has entangled me in this web of necessitarian atheism, conscience rises in rebellion, and cries out indignantly that good is different from evil, that sin is sinful, and that guilt demands atonement. And the longing of my heart convinces me that

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I cannot do without a heavenly Father to love me, a heavenly deliverer to save me from myself."

The "shallow deism of Francis Newman" is that deism which "cries out indignantly that good is different from evil, that sin is sinful," and that prayer is the atmosphere of the moral life. And is this, then, really *shallower* than a pantheism which identifies good with evil; which ignores those moral assumptions on which *alone* Christianity is conceivable; which has the credit of dissolving away the faith in a personal Father, and so denying not only the kingdom but the possibility of Christ? Atheism then is less "shallow" than theism; fatalism is deeper than the recognition of divine law and moral freedom; and the more profound is your trust in God and the voice of conscience,—the more *realities* you confess and live by,—the more ashamed of you and angry with you is the Hard Church that you cannot be more *thorough* in ignoring truth. We lament deeply Mr. Newman's negations; but we feel it an evil sign for the Christian Church when Theology wishes to choose between orthodoxy and *nothing*, and regards it as a proof of a shallow mind that God and God's law should be recognised *at all*, unless they are recognised in their fullest truth. Do these confuting gentlemen ever realise to themselves how vast a step any real and deep Theism that holds fast by prayer, is towards Christianity? Do they ever distinctly remember that God thought this *enough* for the spiritual life of His own people during some thousands of years? Does it never occur to them how striking is the contrast between their scornful alternative, "Pray believe *either* more or less," and the spirit of one who, in reply to a hearty confession of the first two commandments, instead of "exposing" the weakness of such "shallow deism," replied, "Thou art *not far* from the kingdom of God?"

The dread felt and expressed by the reactionary school of liberal theology towards any thing that falls short of their approved *minimum* of Christian dogma arises, we believe, in a totally false and unworthy suspicion of a tendency in too wide a charity to sap the strenuousness of personal conviction. "Unless we attribute," so they seem to argue, "a certain *necessary* wickedness and moral discredit to heresy, we shall not be able to keep our own faith and other people's from oozing away in the genial atmosphere of the world. Let us draw our line in common charity as *low* as we can; but let us keep no terms with any thing that falls below it. For if we ever cease to regard doubt as a disgrace and a danger to others, there is no reason why we should not fall into it ourselves." Thus a recent writer, who, as we suppose, is identical with the author of *Perversion*, in a very vehement and unkind, as well as unjust, attempt to identify Mr. Jowitt's Chris-

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tianity with the shadowy Hegelian pantheism of the last philosophical generation in Germany, expresses his opinion* that a Catholic Christianity is always in danger of passing into indifference:

"The tendency which has produced the works before us is nothing new in the history of the Church of England. The revolution of the wheel has brought us once more into the same current of opinion which prevailed at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The tolerant and catholic Christianity, which seems for the moment in the ascendant, may lapse into the rejection of all fixed belief, or into cold indifferentism—just as the spirit of Tillotson was superseded by the spirit of Hoadly. The pantheism of Lord Bolingbroke is once more popular; many an utterance of Emerson may be found under a poetical form in the *Essay on Man;* and Pope's 'universal prayer' to 'Jehovah, Jove, or Lord,' would serve as a summary of Theodore Parker's 'absolute religion.' It is not useless, therefore, to remember what were the fruits of such theories in a former age; what was the effect upon the national morality of substituting a mutilated Christianity for the preaching of the Faith."

The writer may be wise to guard us against that mere geniality of thought which proceeds only from a universal liking for men of all sorts, not from a deep trust in God; but this is *not* the basis of a genuine catholicity of faith, which is, while we can keep a fast hold on it, far more widely removed from latitudinarian carelessness as to what men may think than any dogmatic bigotry can ever hope to be. The trust that Truth is the living Word of God, communicated to men as a *character* can alone be communicated—to different minds by different teaching, and by differently winding courses—to some slowly but intensely, in points of vivid light with large intervals of unintelligent darkness—to others with rapid evolutions of the general outline and meaning of His providence and discipline, yet perhaps with a less deep and constant sympathy of moral life,—to all who eagerly seek what is right with a gradual clearness and eventual certainty—this is the trust on which alone true catholicity of feeling can be based, and with which indifference is wholly incompatible. Those who fancy their opinions *private* property are likely to be angry at the shock of finding them unconfirmed by others, and so to fall into bigotry,—or, on the other hand, to be so perplexed at many differences as to fall into apathetic indifference. But those who know that what they see, they see only because God has shown it to them,—that it is a partial and gradual manifestation of Him, to the vision of which they had very slowly opened their eyes, that has given them faith,—

* *Quarterly Review* for December 1855. Article V.: On the Neology of the Cloister.

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will hesitate to think that in His dealings with others He must have made the same truth clear in the same way and at the same time, and yet will know that it can never pass away.

We are persuaded that the hard dogmatic type of Christianity rests on a thoroughly imperfect conception of inspiration and revelation. "Our ground briefly is," says the writer of whom we have before spoken, "that if Christianity be a divine revelation at all, then the messengers divinely commissioned to reveal it must be authoritative in *the subject-matter of the revelation*—that is, in religious and moral truths." But what is this "subject-matter of revelation,"—this "religious and moral truth"?—*not*, we conceive, a series of *propositions* of any kind. The whole tenor of the Bible forbids the assumption. Revelation was a taking away of the veil from the spiritual world,—a presentation to the spirits of prophets and apostles of the inward life of God and Christ. The "Inspired Writings" are not, as all now hold, dictated writings,—neither are they writings in which any one sentence professes to transmit a *proposition* from Heaven to Earth. They are simply the writings of men profoundly and utterly occupied by the influences of God and Christ over their spirits. The "inspired" writers are men whose hearts were more or less absolutely penetrated with that life, beneath the spell of which they might have lived, and perhaps sometimes did live, with reluctant wills. They surely diminished their inspiration with every act of resistance, and deepened it in every faithful hour. Peter surely diminished his inspiration—drew a new film across the unveiled life of God—when he yielded, contrary to his conscience, to the dread of the Judaic party; and was drawn into a clearer light when he told the Sanhedrim that he could not "hearken unto them rather than unto God." Paul surely had his "inspiration" clouded by the strife with Barnabas, and by that dexterous use of the spirit of party between Pharisees and Sadducees for which he seems afterwards to have reproached himself. And when is he so deeply inspired, as when he is speaking of that "charity" which it was the greatest of his conquests over the natural man thus deeply to understand and exercise? Human thoughts and views, imperfect conceptions, mingle in all the writings of all the Apostles; were it not so, they would be of little use to us; and it is not their transmission to us of miraculous logic, but their fulness of that life which was "hidden with Christ in God," which constitutes their revelation: Christ's life and nature—God's life and nature—were the "subject-matter" of their revelation; and this they revealed exactly in the same manner, and according to the same laws, by which one human being can incarnate and give forth again the highest influence which rules over him.

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Miracle is limited to the physical world; the moral world is constrained by no fixed customs which prevent the free mutual action of mind on mind; and inspiration is not its *miracle*—nay, rather, were it not absolutely *free*, we might more truly call it its *law*. Once let us believe that inspiration and revelation is the gradual unveiling to us of the Eternal life and character, and there will be little reason either to dread indifference, or to doubt that God may be with others who, in having much of His goodness, have *already* much of His Truth, with a sure promise of the whole. If the Hard Church could once be well convinced that the "diffusion of useful knowledge" about the soul and its prospects neither is, nor ever was, the true office of Christianity,—that all the *information* which the Christian gospel gives at all, it gives immediately through fuller insight into the *character* of God,—they would be a little less fond of turning their apostolic staff into a rod, and perhaps begin to understand better "what spirit they are of."

Art. VI.—THE CHARACTER OF SIR ROBERT PEEL.

Memoirs, by the Right Hon. Sir Robert Peel, Bart., M.P., &c. Published by the Trustees of his Papers, Lord Mahon (now Lord Stanhope) and the Right Hon. Edward Cardwell, M.P. Part I. *The Roman Catholic Question*, 1828-9.

Most people have looked over old letters. They have been struck with the change of life, with the doubt on things now certain, the belief in things now incredible, the oblivion of what now seems most important, the strained attention to departed detail, which characterise the mouldering leaves. Something like this is the feeling with which we read Sir Robert Peel's memoirs. Who now doubts on the Catholic question? It is no longer a "question." A younger generation has come into vigorous, perhaps into insolent life, who regard the doubts that were formerly entertained as absurd, pernicious, delusive. To revive the controversy was an error. The accusations which are brought against a public man in his own age are rarely those echoed in after times. Posterity sees less or sees more. A few points stand forth in distinct rigidity; there is no idea of the countless accumulation, the collision of action, the web of human feeling, with which, in the day of their life, they were encompassed. Time changes much. The points of controversy seem clear; the assumed premises uncertain. The difficulty is to comprehend "the difficulty." Sir Robert Peel will have to answer

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to posterity not for having passed Catholic emancipation when he did, but for having opposed it before; not for having been precipitate, but for having been slow; not for having taken "insufficient securities" for the Irish Protestant Church, but for having endeavoured to take security for an institution too unjust to be secured by laws or lawgivers.

This memoir has, however, a deeper aim. Its end is rather personal than national. It is designed to show not that Sir Robert did what was externally expedient—this was probably too plain—but that he himself really believed what he did to be right. The scene is laid not in Ireland, not in the county of Clare, not amid the gross triumph of O'Connell, or the outrageous bogs of Tipperary, but in the Home Office, among files of papers, among the most correctly-docketed memoranda, beside the minute which shows that Justice A should be dismissed, that malefactor O ought not to be reprieved. It is labelled "My Conscience," and is designed to show that "my conscience" was sincere.

Seriously, and apart from jesting, this is no light matter. Not only does the great space which Sir Robert Peel occupied during many years in the history of the country entitle his character to the anxious attention of historical critics, but the very nature of that character itself, its traits, its deficiencies, its merits, are so congenial to the tendencies of our time and government, that to be unjust to him is to be unjust to all probable statesmen. We design to show concisely how this is.

A constitutional statesman is in general a man of common opinions and uncommon abilities. The reason is obvious. When we speak of a free government, we mean a government in which the sovereign power is divided, in which a single decision is not absolute, where argument has an office. The essence of the "gouvernement des avocats," as the Emperor Nicholas called it, is that you must persuade so many persons. The appeal is not to the solitary decision of a single statesman; not to Richelieu or Nesselrode alone in his closet; but to the jangled mass of men, with a thousand pursuits, a thousand interests, a thousand various habits. Public opinion, as it is said, rules; and public opinion is the opinion of the average man. Fox used to say of Burke: "Burke is a wise man; but he is wise too soon." The average man will not bear this. He is a cool, common person, with a considerate air, with figures in his mind, with his own business to attend to, with a set of ordinary opinions arising from and suited to ordinary life. He can't bear novelty or originalities. He says: "Sir, I never heard such a thing *before* in my life;" and he thinks this a *reductio ad absurdum*. You may see his taste by the reading of which he

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approves. Is there a more splendid monument of talent and industry than the *Times?* No wonder that the average man—that any one—believes in it. As Carlyle observes: "Let the highest intellect able to write epics try to write such a leader for the morning newspapers, it cannot do it; the highest intellect will fail." But did you ever see any thing there you had never seen before? Out of the million articles that every body has read, can any one person trace a single marked idea to a single article? Where are the deep theories, and the wise axioms, and the everlasting sentiments which the writers of the most influential publication in the world have been the first to communicate to an ignorant species? Such writers are far too shrewd. The two million, or whatever number of copies it may be, they publish, are not purchased because the buyers wish to know new truth. The purchaser desires an article which he can appreciate at sight; which he can lay down and say, "An excellent article, very excellent; exactly my own sentiments." Original theories give trouble; besides, a grave man on the Coal Exchange does not desire to be an apostle of novelties among the contemporaneous dealers in fuel;—he wants to be provided with remarks he can make on the topics of the day which will not be known *not* to be his; that are not too profound; which he can fancy the paper only reminded him of. And just in the same way, precisely as the most popular political paper is not that which is abstractedly the best or most instructive, but that which most exactly takes up the minds of men where it finds them, catches the floating sentiment of society, puts it in such a form as society can fancy would convince another society which did not believe,—so the most influential of constitutional statesmen is the one who most felicitously expresses the creed of the moment, who administers it, who embodies it in laws and institutions, who gives it the highest life it is capable of, who induces the average man to think "I could not have done it any better if I had had time myself."

It might be said that this is only one of the results of that tyranny of commonplace which seems to accompany civilisation. You may talk of the tyranny of Nero and Tiberius; but the real tyranny is the tyranny of your next-door neighbour. What law is so cruel as the law of doing what he does? What yoke is so galling as the necessity of being like him? What *espionage* of despotism comes to your door so effectually as the eye of the man who lives at your door? Public opinion is a permeating influence, and it exacts obedience to itself; it requires us to think other men's thoughts, to speak other men's words, to follow other men's habits. Of course, if we do not, no formal ban issues, no corporeal pain, the coarse penalty of a barbarous so-

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ciety, is inflicted on the offender; but we are called "eccentric;" there is a gentle murmur of "most unfortunate ideas," "singular young man," "well-intentioned, I dare say; but unsafe, sir, quite unsafe." The prudent, of course, conform. The place of nearly every body depends on the opinion of every one else. There is nothing like Swift's precept to attain the repute of a sensible man, "Be of the opinion of the person with whom at the time you are conversing." This world is given to those whom this world can trust. Our very conversation is infected. Where is now the bold humour, the explicit statement, the grasping dogmatism of former days? They have departed; and you read in the orthodox works dreary regrets that the *art* of conversation has passed away. It would be as reasonable to expect the art of walking to pass away. People talk well enough when they know to whom they are speaking. We might even say that the art of conversation was improved by an application to new circumstances. "Secrete your intellect, use common words, say what you are expected to say," and you shall be at peace. The secret of prosperity in common life is to be commonplace on principle.

Whatever truth there may be in these splenetic observations, might be expected to show itself more particularly in the world of politics. People dread to be thought unsafe in proportion as they get their living by being thought to be safe. "Literary men," it has been said, "are outcasts;" and they are eminent in a certain way notwithstanding. "They can say strong things of their age; for no one expects they will go out and act on them." They are a kind of ticket-of-leave lunatics, from whom no harm is for the moment expected; who seem quiet, but on whose vagaries a practical public must have its eye. For statesmen it is different—they must be thought men of judgment. The most morbidly agricultural counties were aggrieved when Mr. Disraeli was made Chancellor of the Exchequer. They could not believe he was a man of solidity; and they could not comprehend taxes by the author of *Coningsby*, or sums by an adherent of the Caucasus. "There is," said Sir Walter Scott, "a certain hypocrisy of action, which, however it is despised by persons intrinsically excellent, will nevertheless be cultivated by those who desire the good repute of men." Politicians, as has been said, live in the repute of the commonalty. They may appeal to posterity; but of what use is posterity? Years before that tribunal comes into life your life will be extinct. It is like a moth going into Chancery. Those who desire a public career, must look to the views of the living public; an immediate exterior influence is essential to the exertion of their faculties. The confidence of others is your *fulcrum*. You cannot, many people wish you

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could, go into parliament to represent yourself. You must conform to the opinions of the electors; and they, depend on it, will not be original. In a word, as has been most wisely observed, "under free institutions it is necessary occasionally to defer to the opinions of other people; and as other people are obviously in the wrong, this is a great hindrance to the improvement of our political system, and the progress of our species."

Seriously, it is a calamity that this is so. Occasions arise in which a different sort of statesman is required. A year or two ago we had one of these. If any politician had come forward in this country, on the topic of the war, with prepared intelligence, distinct views, strong will, commanding mastery, it would have brought support to anxious intellects, and comfort to a thousand homes. None such came. Our people would have statesmen who thought as they thought, believed as they believed, acted as they would have acted. They had desired to see their own will executed. There came a time when they had no clear will, no definite opinion. They reaped as they had sown. As they had selected an administrative tool, of course it did not turn out an heroic leader.

If we wanted to choose an illustration of these remarks out of all the world, it would be Sir Robert Peel. No man has come so near our definition of a constitutional statesman,—the powers of a first-rate man and the creed of a second-rate man. From a certain peculiarity of intellect and fortune, he was never in advance of his time. Of almost all the great measures with which his name is associated, he attained great eminence as an opponent before he attained even greater eminence as their advocate. On the corn-laws, on the currency, on the amelioration of the criminal code, on Catholic emancipation,—the subject of the memoir before us,—he was not one of the earliest labourers, or quickest converts. He did not bear the burden and heat of the day; other men laboured, and he entered into their labours. As long as these questions remained the property of first-class intellects, as long as they were confined to philanthropists or speculators, as long as they were only advocated by austere intangible Whigs, Sir Robert Peel was against them. So soon as these same measures, by the progress of time, the striving of understanding, the conversion of receptive minds, became the property of second-class intellects, Sir Robert Peel became possessed of them also. He was converted at the conversion of the average man. His creed was, as it had ever been, ordinary; but his extraordinary abilities never showed themselves so much. He forthwith wrote his name on each of those questions; so that it will be remembered as long as they are remembered.

Nor is it merely on these few measures that Sir Robert Peel's

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mind must undoubtedly have undergone a change. The lifetime of few Englishmen has been more exactly commensurate with a change of public opinion—a total revolution of political thought. Hardly any fact in history is so incredible as that forty and a few years ago England was ruled by Mr. Percival. It seems almost the same as being ruled by the *Record* newspaper. He had the same poorness of thought, the same petty Conservatism, the same dark and narrow superstition. His quibbling mode of oratory seems to have been scarcely agreeable to his friends; his impotence in political speculation moves the wrath—destroys the patience of the quietest reader now. Other ministers have had great connections, or great estates, to compensate for the contractedness of their minds. Mr. Percival was only a poorish nisi prius lawyer, and there is no kind of human being so disagreeable, so teasing, to the gross Tory nature. He is not entitled to any glory for our warlike successes: on the contrary, he did his best to obtain failure by starving the Duke of Wellington, and plaguing him with petty vexations. His views in religion inclined to that Sabbatarian superstition which is of all creeds the most alien to the firm and genial English nature. The mere fact of such a premier being endured shows how deeply the whole national spirit and interest was absorbed in the contest with Napoleon, how little we understood the sort of man who should regulate its conduct—"in the crisis of Europe," as Sydney Smith said, "he safely brought the Curates' Salaries Improvement Bill to a hearing"—and it still more shows the horror of all innovation which the recent events of French history had impressed on our wealthy and comfortable classes. They were afraid of catching revolution, as old women of catching cold. Sir Archibald Alison to this day holds that revolution is an infectious disease, beginning no one knows how, and going no one knows where. There is but one rule of escape, explains the great historian, "Stay still, don't move; do what you have been accustomed to do, and consult your grandmother on every thing." In 1812 the English people were all persuaded of this theory. Mr. Percival was the most narrow-minded and unaltering man they could find: he therefore represented their spirit, and they put him at the head of the state.

Such was the state of political questions. How little of real thoughtfulness was then applied to what we now call social questions cannot be better illustrated than by the proceedings on the occasion of Mr. Percival's death. Bellingham, who killed him, was, whether punishable or not, as clearly insane as a lunatic can be who offends against the laws of his country. He had no idea of killing Mr. Percival particularly. His only idea was, that he had lost some property in Russia; that the English government would never repay him his loss in Russia; and he endeavoured

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to find some cabinet minister to shoot as a compensation. Lord Eldon lived under the belief that he had nearly been the victim himself, and told some story of a borrowed hat and an assistant's greatcoat to which he ascribed his preservation. The whole affair was a monomaniac delusion. Bellingham had no ground for expecting any repayment. There was no reason for ascribing his pecuniary ruin to the government of that day any more than to the government of this day. Indeed, if he had been alive now, it would have been agreed that he was a particularly estimable man. Medical gentlemen would have been examined for days on the doctrine of "irresistible impulse," "moral insanity," "instinctive pistol-discharges," and every respectful sympathy would have been shown to so curious an offender. Whether he was punishable or not may be a question; but all will now agree that it was not a case for the punishment of death. In that day there was no more doubt that he ought to be hung than there would now be that he ought on no account to be hung. The serious reasons, of which the scientific theories above alluded to are but the exaggerated resemblance, which indicate the horrible cruelty of inflicting on those who do not know what they do the extreme penalty of suffering meant for those who perpetrate the worst they can conceive, are in these years so familiar that we can hardly conceive their being unknown. Yet the Tory historian has to regret "that the motion, so earnestly insisted on by his counsel, to have the trial postponed for some days, to obtain evidence to establish his insanity, was not acceded to; that a judicial proceeding, requiring beyond all others the most calm and deliberate consideration, should have been hurried over with a precipitation which, if not illegal, was at least unusual;" and a noble lord "improved" the moment of the assassination by exclaiming to the peers in opposition, "You see, my lords, the consequence of your agitating the question of *Catholic emancipation.*" To those who now know England, it seems scarcely possible this could have occurred here only forty-four years since. It was in such a world that Sir Robert Peel commenced his career. He was under-secretary of state for the colonies at the time of Mr. Percival's assassination.

It is not, however, to be imagined that, even if Mr. Percival had lived, his power would have very long endured. It passed to milder and quieter men. It passed to such men as Lord Liverpool and Mr. Peel. The ruling power at that time in England, as for many years before, as even in some measure, though far less, now, was the class of aristocratic gentry; by which we do not mean to denote only the House of Lords, and do not mean to exclude the House of Lords, but to indicate the great class of hereditary landed proprietors, who are in sympathy with the upper house on cardinal points, yet breathe a somewhat freer air,

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are more readily acted on by the opinion of the community, more contradictable by the lower herd, less removed from its prejudices by a refined and regulated education. From the time of the Revolution, more or less, this has been the ruling class in the community; the close-borough system and the county system giving them mainly the control of the House of Commons, and their feelings being in general, as it were, a mean term between those of the higher nobility and the trading public of what were then the few large towns. The rule of the House of Lords was rather mediate than direct. By those various means of influence and social patronage and oppression which are familiar to a wealthy and high-bred aristocracy, the highest members of it, of course, did exercise over all below them a sure and continual influence: it worked silently and commonly on ordinary questions and in quiet times; yet it was liable to be overborne by a harsher and ruder power when stormy passions arose, in the days of wars and tumults. So far as the actual selection of visible rulers goes, the largest amount of administrative power has rarely been in the hands of the highest aristocracy, and in a great measure for a peculiar reason: that aristocracy will rarely do the work, and can rarely do the work. The enormous pressure of daily-growing business which besets the governors of a busy and complicated community is too much for the refined habits, delicate discrimination, anxious judgment, which the course of their life develops in the highest classes, and with which it nourishes the indolence natural to those who have this world to enjoy. The real strain of the necessary labour has generally been borne by men of a somewhat lower grade, trained by an early ambition, a native aptitude, a hardy competition, to perform its copious tasks. Such men are partakers of two benefits. They are rough and ready enough to accomplish the coarse enormous daily work; they have lived with higher gentlemen enough to know and feel what such persons think and want. Sir Robert Walpole is the type of this class. He was a Norfolk squire, and not a nobleman; he was bred a gentleman, and yet was quite coarse enough for any business: his career was what you would expect. For very many years he administered the government much as the aristocracy wished and desired. *They* were, so to speak, the directors of the company which is called the English nation; they met a little and talked a little: but Sir Robert was the manager, who knew all the facts, came every day, saw every body, and was every thing.

Passing over the time of Lord Liverpool, of whom this is not now the place to speak, some such destiny as this would in his first political life have appeared likely to be that of Sir Robert Peel. If an acute master of the betting art had been asked the

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"favourite" statesman who was likely to rule in that generation, he would undoubtedly have selected Sir Robert. He was rich, decorous, laborious, and had devoted himself regularly to the task. There was no other such man. It was likely, at least to superficial observers, that his name would descend to posterity as the "Sir Robert" of a new time;—a time changed, indeed, from that of Walpole, but resembling it in its desire to be ruled by a great administrator, skilful in all kinds of business and transactions, yet associated with the aristocracy; by one unremarkable in his opinions, but remarkable in his powers. The fates, however, designed Peel for a very different destiny; and to a really close observer there were signs in his horoscope which should have clearly revealed it. Sir Robert's father and grandfather were two of the men who created Lancashire. No sooner did the requisite machinery issue from the brain of the inventor than its capabilities were seized on by strong, ready, bold men of business, who erected it, used it, devised a factory system, combined a factory population—created, in a word, that black industrial region, of whose augmenting wealth and horrid labour tales are daily borne to the genial and lazy south. Of course it cannot be said that mill-makers invented the middle classes. The history of England perhaps shows that it has not for centuries been without an unusual number of persons with comfortable and moderate means. But though this class has ever been found among us, and has ever been more active than in any other similar country, yet to a great extent it was scattered, headless, motionless. Small rural out-of-the-way towns, country factories few and far between, concealed and divided this great and mixed mass of petty means and steady intelligence. The huge heaps of manufacturing wealth were not to be concealed. They at once placed on a level with the highest in the land—in matters of expenditure, and in those countless social relations which depend upon expenditure—men sprung from the body of the people, unmistakably speaking its language, inevitably thinking its thoughts. It is true that the first manufacturers were not democratic. Sir Robert Peel, the statesman's father—a type of the class—was a firm, honest, domineering Conservative; but, however on such topics they may so think, however on other topics they may try to catch the language of the class to which they rise, the grain of the middle class will surely show itself in those who have risen from the middle class. If Mr. Cobden were to go over to the enemy, if he were to offer to serve Lord Derby *vice* Disraeli disconcerted, it would not be possible for him to speak as the hereditary landowner speaks. It is not that the hereditary landowner knows more;—indeed, either in book-learning or in matters of observation, in acquaint-

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ance with what has been, or is going to be, or what now is, the owners of rent are not superior to the receivers of profits; yet their dialect is different—the one speaks the language of years of toil, and the other of years of indolence. A harsh laboriousness characterises the one, a pleasant geniality the other. The habit of industry is ingrained in those who have risen by it; it modifies every word and qualifies every notion. They are the *βάναυσοι* of work. Vainly, therefore, did the first manufacturers struggle to be Conservatives, to be baronets, to be peers. The titles they might obtain, their outward existence they might change, themselves in a manner they might alter; but a surer force was dragging them and those who resembled them into another region, filling them with other thoughts, making them express what people of the middle classes had always obscurely felt, pushing forward this new industrial order by the side, or even in front, of the old aristocratic order. The new class has not, indeed, shown itself republican. They have not especially cared to influence the machinery of government. Their peculiarity has been, that they wished to see the government administered according to the notions familiar to them in their business life. They had no belief in mystery or magic; probably they have never appreciated the political influence of the imagination; they wished to see plain sense applied to the most prominent part of practical life. In his later career, the second Sir Robert Peel was the statesman who most completely and thoroughly expressed the sentiments of this new dynasty;—instead of being the nominee of a nobility, he became the representative of a transacting and trading multitude.

Both of these two classes were, however, equally possessed by the vice or tendency we commented on at the outset. They each of them desired to see the government carried on exactly according to their own views. The idea on which seems to rest our only chance of again seeing great statesmen, of placing deep deferential trust in those who have given real proofs of comprehensive sagacity, had scarcely dawned on either. The average man had, so to say, varied; he was no longer of the one order, but of an inferior; but he was not at all less exacting or tyrannical. Perhaps he was even more so; for the indolent gentleman is less absolute and domineering than the active man of business. However that may be, it was the fate of Sir Robert Peel, in the two phases of his career, to take a leading share in carrying out the views, in administering the creed, first of one and then of the other.

Perhaps in our habitual estimate of Peel we hardly enough bear this in mind. We remember him as the guiding chief of the most intelligent Conservative government that this country

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has ever seen. We remember the great legislative acts which we owe to his trained capacity, every detail of which bears the impress of his practised hand; we know that his name is pronounced with applause in the great marts of trade and seats of industry; that even yet it is muttered with reproach in the obscure abodes of squires and rectors. We forget that his name was once the power of the Protestant interest, the shibboleth by which squires and rectors distinguished those whom they loved from those whom they hated; we forget that he defended the Manchester Massacre, the Six Acts, the Imposition of Tests, the rule of Orangemen. We remember Peel as the proper head of a moderate, intelligent, half-commercial community; we forget that he once was the chosen representative of a gentry untrained to great affairs, absorbed in a great war, only just recovering from the horror of a great revolution.

In truth, the character of Sir Robert Peel happily fitted him both to be the chosen head of a popular community, imperiously bent on its own ideas, and to be the head of that community in shifting and changing times. Sir Robert was at Harrow with Lord Byron, who has left the characteristic reminiscence: "I was always in scrapes, Peel never." And opposed as they were in their fortunes as boys and men, they were at least equally contrasted in the habit and kind of action of their minds. Lord Byron's mind gained every thing it was to gain by one intense, striking effort. By a blow of the imagination he elicited a single bright spark of light on every subject, and that was all. And this he never lost. The intensity of the thinking action seemed to burn it on the memory, there to remain alone. But he made no second effort; he gained no more. He always avowed his incapability of continuous application: he could not, he said, learn the grammar of any language. In later life he showed considerable talents for action; but those who had to act with him observed that, versatile as were his talents, and mutable as his convictions had always seemed to be, in reality he was the most stubborn of men. He heard what you had to say, assented to all you had to say; and the next morning returned to his original opinion. No amount of ordinary argumentative resistance was so hopeless as that facile acquiescence and instantaneous recurrence. The truth was, that he was,—and some others are similarly constituted,—unable to retain any thing which he did not at any rate *seem* to gain by the unaided single rush of his own mind. The ideas of such minds are often not new, very often they are hardly in the strictest sense original; they really were very much suggested from without, and preserved in some obscure corner of memory, out of the way and unknown; but it remains their characteristic that they seem to the mind of the

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thinker to be born from its own depths, to be the product of its latent forces. There is a kind of eruption of ideas from a subter-conscious world. The whole mental action is volcanic; the lava flood glows in *Childe Harold;* all the thoughts are intense, flung forth vivid. The day after the eruption the mind is calm; it seems as if it could not again do the like; the product only remains, distinct, peculiar, indestructible. The mind of Peel was the exact opposite of this. His opinions far more resembled the daily accumulating insensible deposits of a rich alluvial soil. The great stream of time flows on with all things on its surface; and slowly, grain by grain, a mould of wise experience is unconsciously left on the still, extended intellect. You scarcely think of such a mind as acting; it seems always acted upon. There is no trace of gushing, overpowering, spontaneous impulse; every thing seems acquired. The thoughts are calm. In Lord Byron, the very style—dashing, free, incisive—shows the bold impulse from which it came. The stealthy accumulating words of Peel seem like the quiet leavings of an outward tendency, which brought these, but might as well have brought others. There is no peculiar stamp either in the ideas. They might have been any one's ideas. They belong to the general diffused stock of observations which are to be found in the civilised world. They are not native to the particular mind, nor "to the manner born." Like a science, they are credible or incredible by all men equally. This *secondary* character, as we may call it, of intellect, is evidently most useful to a statesman of the constitutional class, such as we have described him. He insensibly and inevitably takes in and imbibes, by means of it, the ideas of those around him. If he was left in a vacuum, he would have no ideas. The primary class of mind that strikes out its own belief would here be utterly at fault. It would want something which other men had; it would discover something which other men would not understand. Sir Robert Peel was a statesman for forty years; under our constitution, Lord Byron, eminent as was his insight into men, and remarkable as was his power, at least for short periods, of dealing with them, would not have been a statesman for forty days.

It is very likely that many people may not think Sir Robert Peel's mind so interesting as Lord Byron's. They may prefer the self-originating intellect which invents and retains its own ideas, to the calm receptive intellect which acquires its belief from without. The answer lies in what has been said—a constitutional statesman must sympathise in the ideas of the many. As the many change, it will be his good fortune if he can contrive to change with them. It is to be remembered that statesmen do not live under hermetical seals. Like other men, they

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are influenced by the opinions of other men. How potent is this influence, those best know who have tried to hold ideas different from the ideas of those around.

In another point of view also Sir Robert Peel's character was exactly fitted to the position we have delineated. He was a great administrator. Civilisation requires this. In a simple age work may be difficult, but it is scarce. There are fewer people, and every body wants fewer things. The mere tools of civilisation seem in some sort to augment work. In early times, when a despot wishes to govern a distant province, he sends down a satrap on a grand horse, with other people on little horses; and very little is heard of the satrap again unless he send back some of the little people to tell what he has been doing. No great labour of superintendence is possible. Common rumour and casual complaints are the sources of intelligence. If it seems certain that the province is in a bad state, satrap No. 1 is recalled, and satrap No. 2 sent out in his stead. In civilised countries the whole thing is different. You erect a *bureau* in the province you want to govern; you make it write letters and copy letters; it sends home eight reports per diem to the head *bureau* in St. Petersburg. Nobody does a sum in the province without somebody doing the same sum in the capital, to "check him," and see that he does it correctly. The consequence of this is, to throw on the heads of departments an amount of reading and labour which can only be accomplished by the greatest natural aptitude, the most efficient training, the most firm and regular industry. Under a free government it is by no means better, perhaps in some respects it is worse. It is true that many questions which, under the French despotism, are referred to Paris, are settled in England on the very spot where they are to be done, without reference to London at all. But as a set-off, a constitutional administrator has to be always consulting others, finding out what this man or that man chooses to think; learning which form of error is believed by Lord B., which by Lord C.; adding up the errors of the alphabet, and seeing what portion of what he thinks he ought to do, they will all of them together allow him to do. Likewise, though the personal freedom and individual discretion which free governments allow to their subjects seems at first likely to diminish the work which those governments have to do, it may be doubted whether it does so really and in the end. Individual discretion strikes out so many more pursuits, and some supervision must be maintained over each of those pursuits. No despotic government would consider the police force of London enough to keep down, watch, and superintend such a population; but then no despotic government would have such a city as London to keep down.

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The freedom of growth allows the possibility of growth; and though liberal governments take so much less in proportion upon them, yet the scale of operations is so much enlarged by the continual exercise of civil liberty, that the real work is ultimately perhaps as immense. While a despotic government is regulating ten per cent of ten men's actions, a free government has to regulate one per cent of a hundred men's actions. The difficulty, too, increases. Any body can understand a rough despotic community;—a small buying class of nobles, a small selling class of traders, a large producing class of serfs, are much the same in all quarters of the globe; but a free intellectual community is a complicated network of ramified relations, interlacing and passing hither and thither, old and new,—some of fine city weaving, others of gross agricultural construction. You are never sure what effect any force or any change may produce on a framework so exquisite and so involved. Govern it as you may, it will be a work of great difficulty, labour, and responsibility; and no man who is thus occupied ought ever to go to bed without reflecting, that from the difficulty of his employment he may, probably enough, have that day done more evil than good. What view Sir Robert Peel took of these duties, he has himself informed us.

"Take the case of the Prime Minister. You must presume that he reads every important despatch from every foreign court. He cannot consult with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and exercise the influence which he ought to have with respect to the conduct of foreign affairs, unless he be master of every thing of real importance passing in that department. It is the same with respect to other departments; India, for instance; how can the Prime Minister be able to judge of the course of policy with regard to India unless he be cognisant of all the current important correspondence? In the case of Ireland and the Home Department it is the same. Then the Prime Minister has the patronage of the Crown to exercise, which you say, and justly say, is of so much importance and of so much value; he has to make inquiries into the qualifications of the persons who are candidates; he has to conduct the whole of the communications with the Sovereign; he has to write, probably with his own hand, the letters in reply to all persons of station who address themselves to him; he has to receive deputations on public business; during the sitting of Parliament he is expected to attend six or seven hours a day, while Parliament is sitting, for four or five days in the week; at least he is blamed if he is absent."

The necessary effect of all this labour is, that those subject to it have no opinions. It requires a great deal of time to have opinions. Belief is a slow process. That leisure which the poets

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say is necessary to be good, or to be wise, is needful for the humbler task of allowing respectable maxims to take root respectably. The "wise passiveness" of Mr. Wordsworth is necessary in very ordinary matters. If you chain a man's head to a ledger, and keep him constantly adding up, and take a pound off his salary whenever he stops, you can't expect him to have a sound conviction on Catholic emancipation, tithes, and original ideas on the Transcaucasian provinces. Our system, indeed, seems expressly provided to make it unlikely. The most benumbing thing to the intellect is routine; the most bewildering is distraction: our system is a distracting routine. You see this in the description just given, which is not exhaustive. Sir Robert Peel once asked to have a number of questions carefully written down which they asked him one day in succession in the House of Commons. They seemed a list of every thing that could occur in the British empire, or to the brain of a member of parliament. A premier's whole life is a series of such transitions. It is rather wonderful that our public men have any minds left, than that a certain unfixity of opinion seems growing upon them.

We may go further on this subject. A great administrator is not a man likely to desire to have fixed opinions. His natural bent and tendency is to immediate action. The existing pressing circumstances of the case fill up his mind. The letters to be answered, the documents to be filed, the memoranda to be made, engross his attention. He is angry if you distract him. A bold person who suggests a matter of principle, or a difficulty of thought, or an abstract result that seems improbable in the case "before the board," will be set down as a speculator, a theorist, a troubler of practical life. To expect to hear from such men profound views of future policy, digested plans of distant action, is to mistake their genius entirely. It is like asking the broker of the Stock Exchange what will be the price of the funds this day six months? His whole soul is absorbed in thinking what that price will be in ten minutes. A momentary change of an eighth is more important to him than a distant change of a hundred eighths. So the brain of a great administrator is naturally occupied with the details of the day, the passing dust, the granules of that day's life; and his unforeseeing temperament turns away uninterested from reaching speculations, from vague thought, and from extensive and far-off plans. Of course, it is not meant that a great administrator has absolutely no general views; some indeed he must have. A man cannot conduct the detail of affairs without having some plan which regulates that detail. He cannot help having some idea, vague or accurate, indistinct or distinct, of the direction in which he is going, and the purpose for which he is travelling. But the difference is, that this plan is

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seldom his own, the offspring of his own brain, the result of his own mental contention; it is the plan of some one else. Providence generally bestows on the working adaptive man a quiet adoptive nature. He receives insensibly the suggestions of others; he hears them with willing ears; he accepts them with placid belief. An acquiescent credulity is a quality of such men's nature; they cannot help being sure that what every one says must be true; the *vox populi* is a part of their natural religion. It has been made a matter of wonder that Peel should have belonged to the creed of Mr. Percival and Lord Sidmouth. Perhaps, indeed, our existing psychology will hardly explain the process by which a decorous young man acquires the creed of his era. He assumes its belief as he assumes its costume. He imitates the respectable classes. He avoids an original opinion, like an *outré* coat; a new idea, like an unknown tie. Especially he does so on matters of real concern to him, on those on which he knows he must act. He acquiesces in the creed of the orthodox agents. He scarcely considers for himself; he acknowledges the apparent authority of dignified experience. He is, he remembers, but the junior partner in the firm; it does not occur to him to doubt that those were right who were occupied in its management years before him. In this way he acquires an experience which more independent and original minds are apt to want. There was a great cry when the Whigs came into office, at the time of the Reform Bill, that they were not men of business. Of course, after a very long absence from office, they could not possess a technical acquaintance with official forms, a trained facility in official action. This Sir Robert Peel acquired from his apprenticeship to Mr. Percival. His early connection with the narrow Conservative party has been considered a disadvantage to him; but it may well be doubted whether his peculiar mind was not more improved by the administrative training than impaired by the contact with prejudiced thoughts. He never could have been a great thinker; he became what nature designed, a great agent.

In a third respect also Sir Robert Peel conformed to the type of a constitutional statesman; and that third respect also seems naturally to lead to a want of defined principle, and to apparent fluctuation of opinion. He was a great debater; and of all pursuits ever invented by man for separating the faculty of argument from the capacity of belief, the art of debating is probably the most effectual. Mr. Macaulay tells us that, in his opinion, this is "the most serious of the evils which are to be set off against the many blessings of popular government. The keenest and most vigorous minds of every generation, minds often admirably fitted for the investigation of truth, are

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habitually employed in producing arguments such as no man of sense would ever put into a treatise intended for publication,—arguments which are just good enough to be used once, when aided by fluent delivery and pointed language. The habit of discussing questions in this way necessarily reacts on the intellects of our ablest men, particularly of those who are introduced into Parliament at a very early age, before their minds have expanded to full maturity. The talent for debate is developed in such men to a degree which, to the multitude, seems as marvellous as the performances of an Italian *improvvisatore*. But they are fortunate indeed if they retain unimpaired the faculties which are required for close reasoning, or for enlarged speculation. Indeed, we should sooner expect a great original work on political science,—such a work, for example, as the *Wealth of Nations*, —from an apothecary in a country town, or from a minister in the Hebrides, than from a statesman who, ever since he was one-and-twenty, had been a distinguished debater in the House of Commons." But it may well be doubted whether there is not in the same pursuit a deeper evil, hard to eradicate, and tending to corrupt and destroy the minds of those who are beneath its influence. Constitutional statesmen are obliged not only to employ arguments which they do not think conclusive, but likewise to defend opinions which they do not believe to be true. Whether we approve it or lament it, there is no question that our existing political life is deeply marked by the habit of advocacy. Perhaps fifteen measures may annually, on an average, be brought in by a cabinet government of fifteen persons. It is impossible to believe that all members of that cabinet agree in all those measures. No two people agree in fifteen things; fifteen clever men never yet agreed in any thing; yet they all defend them, argue for them, are responsible for them. It is always quite possible that the minister who is strenuously defending a bill in the House of Commons may have used in the cabinet the very arguments which the Opposition are using in the House; he may have been overruled without being convinced; he may still think the conclusions he opposes better than those which he inculcates. It is idle to say that he ought to go out; at least it amounts to saying that government by means of a cabinet is impossible. The object of a committee of that kind is to agree on certain conclusions; if every member after the meeting were to start off according to the individual bent and bias of his mind, according to his own individual discretion or indiscretion, the previous concurrence would have become childish. Of course, the actual measure proposed by the collective voice of several persons is very different from what any one of these persons would of himself wish; it is the result of a compromise between them. Each,

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perhaps, has obtained some concession; each has given up something. Every one sees in the actual proposal something of which he strongly disapproves; every one regrets the absence of something which he much desires. Yet on the whole, perhaps, he thinks the measure better than no measure; or at least he thinks that if he went out, it would break up the government; and imagines it to be of more consequence that the government should be maintained than that the particular measure should be rejected. He concedes his individual judgment. No one has laid this down with more distinctness than Sir Robert Peel:—"Supposing a person at a dinner-table to express his private opinion of a measure originating with a party with whom he is united in public life, is he, in the event of giving up that private opinion out of deference to his party, to be exposed to a charge almost amounting to dishonesty? The idea is absurd.—What is the every-day conduct of government itself? Is there any one in this House so ignorant as to suppose that on all questions cabinet ministers, who yield to the decision of their colleagues, speak and act in parliament in strict conformity with the opinions they have expressed in the cabinet? If ministers are to be taunted on every occasion that they hold opinions in the cabinet different from what they do in this House, and if parliament is to be made the scene of these taunts, I believe I should not be going too far in saying, the House would have time for little else. It is the uniform practice with all governments, and I should be sorry to think the practice carries any stain with it, for a member of the administration who chances to entertain opinions differing from those of the majority of his colleagues, rather than separate himself from them, to submit to be overruled, and even though he do not fully concur in their policy, to give his support to the measures which, as an administration, they promulgate. I will give the House an instance of this fact. It was very generally reported on a late occasion, that upon the question of sending troops to Portugal a strong difference of opinion took place in the cabinet. Now would it, I ask, be either just or fair to call on those who, in the discussion of the cabinet, had spoken in favour of sending out troops to aid the cause of Donna Maria, to come down, and in parliament advocate that measure in opposition to the decision of their colleagues? No one would think of doing so." It may not carry a stain; but it is a painful idea.

It is evident, too, that this necessarily leads to great apparent changes of opinion—to the professed belief of a statesman at one moment being utterly different from what it seems to be at another moment. When a government is founded, questions A, B, C, D, E, F, are the great questions of the day,—the matters which are obvious, pressing,—which the public mind comprehends. X, Y, Z,

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are in the background, little thought of, obscure. According to the received morality, no statesman would hesitate to sacrifice the last to the first. He might have a very strong personal opinion on X, but he would surrender it to a colleague as the price of his cooperation on A or B. A few years afterwards times change. Question A is carried, B settles itself, E and F are forgotten, X becomes the most important topic of the day. The statesman who conceded X before, now feels that he no longer can concede it; there is no equivalent. He has never in reality changed his opinion, yet he has to argue in favour of the very measures which he endeavoured before to argue against. Everybody thinks he has changed, and without going into details, the secrecy of which is esteemed essential to confidential cooperation, it is impossible that he can evince his consistency. It is impossible to doubt that this is a very serious evil, and it is plainly one consequent on or much exaggerated by a popular and argumentative government. It is very possible for a conscientious man, under a bureaucratic government, to cooperate with the rest of a council in the elaboration and execution of measures many of which he thinks inexpedient. Nobody asks him his opinion; he has not to argue, or defend, or persuade. But a free government boasts that it is carried on in the face of day. Its principle is discussion; its habit is debate. The consequence is, that those who conduct it have to defend measures they disapprove, to object to measures they approve, to appear to have an accurate opinion on points on which they really have no opinion. The calling of a constitutional statesman is very much that of a political advocate; he receives a new brief with the changing circumstances of each successive day. It is easy to conceive a cold sardonic intellect, moved with contempt at such a life, casting aside the half-and-half pretences with which others partly deceive themselves, stating any thing, preserving an intellectual preference for truth, but regarding any effort at its special advocacy as the weak aim of foolish men, striving for what they cannot attain. Lord Lyndhurst has shown us that it is possible to lead the life of Lord Lyndhurst. One can conceive, too, a cold and somewhat narrow intellect, capable of forming, in any untroubled scene, an accurate plain conviction, but without much power of entering into the varying views of others; little skilled in diversified argument; understanding its own opinion, and not understanding the opinions of others;—one can imagine such a mind pained, and cracked, and shattered, by endeavouring to lead a life of ostentatious argument in favour of others' opinions, of half-concealment of its chill unaltering essence. It will be for posterity to make due allowance for the variance between the character and the position of Lord John Russell.

Sir Robert Peel was exactly fit for this life. The word which

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exactly fits his oratory is—specious. He hardly ever said any thing which struck you in a moment to be true; he never uttered a sentence which for a moment any body could deny to be plausible. Once, when they were opposed on a railway-bill, the keen irascibility of Lord Derby stimulated him to observe "that *no one* knew like the right honourable baronet how to *dress up* a case for that House." The art of statement, the power of detail, the watching for the weak points of an opponent, an average style adapting itself equally to what the speaker believed and what he disbelieved, a business air, a didactic precision for what it was convenient to make clear, an unctuous disguise of flowing periods, and "a deep sense of responsibility" for what it was convenient to conceal—an enormous facility,—made Sir Robert Peel a nearly unequalled master of the art of political advocacy. For his times he was perhaps quite unequalled. He might have failed in times of deep outpouring patriotic excitement; he had not nature enough to express it. He might have failed in an age when there was nothing to do, and when elegant personality and the *finesse* of artistic expression were of all things most required. But for an age of important business, when there were an unusual number of great topics to be discussed, but none great enough to hurry men away from their business habits, or awaken the most ardent passion or the highest imagination, there is nothing like the oratory of Peel,—able but not aspiring, firm but not exalted, never great but ever adequate to great affairs. It is curious to know that he was trained to the trade.

"Soon after Peel was born, his father, the first baronet, finding himself rising daily in wealth and consequence, and believing that money in those peculiar days could always command a seat in parliament, determined to bring up his son expressly for the House of Commons. When that son was quite a child, Sir Robert would frequently set him on the table, and say, 'Now, Robin, make a speech, and I will give you this cherry.' What few words the little fellow produced were applauded; and applause stimulating exertion, produced such effects that, before Robin was ten years old, he could really address the company with some degree of eloquence. As he grew up, his father constantly took him every Sunday into his private room, and made him repeat, as well as he could, the sermon which had been preached. Little progress in effecting this was made, and little was expected *at first;* but by steady perseverance the habit of attention grew powerful, and the sermon was repeated almost *verbatim*. When at a very distant day the senator, remembering accurately the speech of an opponent, answered his arguments in correct succession, it was little known that the power of so doing was originally acquired in Drayton church."

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A mischievous observer might say that something else had remained to Sir Robert Peel from these sermons. His tone is a trifle sermonic. He failed where perhaps alone Lord John Russell has succeeded—in the oratory of conviction.

If we bear in mind the whole of these circumstances; if we picture in our minds a nature at once active and facile, easily acquiring its opinions from without, not easily devising them from within, a large placid adaptive intellect, devoid of irritable intense originality, prone to forget the ideas of yesterday, inclined to accept the ideas of to-day,—if we imagine a man so formed cast early into absorbing exhausting industry of detail, with work enough to fill up a life, with action of itself enough to render speculation almost impossible,—placed too in a position unsuited to abstract thought, of which the conventions and rules require that a man should feign other men's thoughts, should impugn his own opinions,—we shall begin to imagine a conscientious man destitute of convictions on the occupations of his life—to comprehend the character of Sir Robert Peel.

That Sir Robert was a very conscientious man is quite certain. It is even probable that he had a morbid sense of administrative responsibility. We do not say that he was so weighed down as Lord Liverpool, who is alleged never to have opened his letters without a pang of foreboding that something had miscarried somewhere; but every testimony agrees that Sir Robert had an anxious sense of duty in detail. Lord Wellesley, somewhere in this volume, on an occasion when it would have been at least equally natural to speak of administrative capacity and efficient cooperation, mentions only "the real impressions which your kindness and high character have fixed in my mind." The circumstances of his end naturally produced a crowd of tributes to his memory, and hardly any of them omit his deep sense of the obligations of action. The characteristic too is written conspicuously on every line of these memoirs. Disappointing and external as in some respects they seem, they all the more evidently bear witness to this trait. They read like the conscientious letters of an ordinary practical man; the great statesman has little other notion than that it is his duty to transact his business well. As a conspicuous merit, the Duke of Wellington, oddly enough according to some people's notions at the time, selected Peel's veracity: "In the whole course of my communication with him I have never known an instance in which he did not show the strictest preference for truth. I never had, in the whole course of my life, the slightest reason for suspecting that he stated any thing which he did not firmly believe to be the fact. I could not sit down without stating what I believe, after a long acquaintance, to have been his most

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striking characteristic." Simple people in the country were a little astonished to hear so strong a eulogy on a man for not telling lies. They were under the impression that people in general did not. But those who have considered the tempting nature of a statesman's pursuits, the secrets of office, the inevitable complication of his personal relations, will not be surprised that many statesmen should be without veracity, or that one should be eulogised for possessing it. It is to be remarked, however, in mitigation of so awful an excellence, that Sir Robert was seldom "in scrapes," and that it is on those occasions that the virtue of veracity is apt to be most severely tested. The same remark is applicable to the well-praised truthfulness of the Duke himself.

In conjunction with the great soldier, Sir Robert Peel is entitled to the fame of a great act of administrative conscience. He purified the Tory party. There is little doubt that, during the long and secure reign which the Tories enjoyed about the beginning of the century, there was much of the corruption naturally incident to a strong party with many adherents to provide for, uncontrolled by an effectual Opposition, unwatched by a great nation. Of course, too, any government remaining over from the last century would inevitably have adhering to it various *remanet* corruptions of that curious epoch. There flourished those mighty sinecures and reversions, a few of which still remain to be the wonder and envy of an unenjoying generation. The House of Commons was not difficult then to manage. There is a legend that a distinguished Treasury official of the last century, a very capable man, used to say of any case which was hopelessly and inevitably bad: "Ah, we must apply our majority to this question;" and no argument is so effectual as the mechanical, calculable suffrage of a strong unreasoning party. There were doubtless many excellent men in the Tory party, even in its least excellent days; but the two men to whom the party, as such, owes most of purification were the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert Peel. From the time when they became responsible for the management of a Conservative government, there was no doubt, in office or in the nation, that the public money and patronage were administered by men whom no consideration would induce to use either for their personal benefit; and who would, as far as their whole power lay, discourage and prevent the corrupt use of either by others. The process by which they succeeded in conveying this impression is illustrated by a chapter in the Dean of York's *Memoir of Peel*, in which that well-known dignitary recounts the temptations which he applied to the political purity of his relative:

"While Peel was secretary for Ireland, I asked him to give a very

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trifling situation, nominally in his gift, to a worthy person for whom I felt an interest. He wrote me word that he was really anxious to oblige me in this matter, but that a nobleman of much parliamentary interest, who supported the government, insisted upon his right to dispose of all patronage in his own neighbourhood. So anxious was Peel to show his good will towards me, that he prevailed upon the Lord-Lieutenant to ask as a favour from the aforesaid nobleman that the situation might be given to my nominee; but the marquis replied, that the situation was of no value, yet, to prevent a dangerous precedent, he must refuse the application.

In times long after, when Sir Robert Peel became prime minister, I asked him often in the course of many years for situations for my sons, which situations were vacant and in his immediate gift. I subjoin three letters which I received from him on these subjects; they were written after long intervals and at different periods, but they all speak the same language:

'Whitehall, December 20 (no date of year).

MY DEAR DEAN OF YORK,—I thank you for your consideration of what you deem the unrequited sacrifice which I make in the public service. But I beg to say, that my chief consolation and reward is the *consciousness* that my exertions are disinterested—that I have considered official patronage as a public trust, to be applied to the reward and encouragement of public service, or to the less praiseworthy, but still necessary, purpose of promoting the general interests of the government. That patronage is so wholly inadequate to meet the fair claims of a public nature that are daily presented for my consideration, and that constitute the chief torment of office, that I can only overcome the difficulties connected with the distribution by the utmost forbearance as to deriving any personal advantage from it. If I had absolute control over the appointment to which you refer, I should apply it to the satisfaction of one or other of the engagements into which I entered when I formed the government, and which (from the absolute want of means) remain unfulfilled. But I have informed the numerous parties who have applied to me on the subject of that appointment, that I feel it to be my duty, on account of the present condition of the board and the functions they have to perform, to select for it some experienced man of business connected with the naval profession, or some man distinguished in that profession.

Believe me, my dear Dean, affectionately yours,

ROBERT PEEL.'

I applied again for another place of less importance; the answer was much as before.

'Whitehall, April 5, 1843.

MY DEAR DEAN OF YORK,—I must dispose of the appointment to which you refer upon the same principle on which I have uniformly disposed of every appointment of a similar nature.

I do not consider patronage of this kind (and, indeed, I may truly say it of all patronage) as the means of gratifying private wishes of any one. Those who have made locally great sacrifices and great exertions

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for the maintenance of the political cause which they espouse, have always been considered fairly entitled to be consulted in respect to the disposal of local patronage, and would justly complain if, in order to promote the interests of a relative of my own, I were to disregard their recommendations. It would subject me to great personal embarrassment, and be a complete departure from the rule to which I have always adhered.

All patronage of all descriptions, so far from being of the least advantage personally to a minister, involves him in nothing but embarrassment.

Ever affectionately yours,
ROBERT PEEL.'

I publish one more letter of the same kind, because all these letters exhibit the character of the writer, and contain matters of some public interest. The distributor of stamps died in the very place where my son was resident, and where he and I had exerted considerable interest in assisting the government members. I thought that now, perhaps, an exception might be made to the general rule, and I confidently recommended my eldest son for the vacancy. The following was the answer:

'Whitehall, May 1.

MY DEAR DEAN,—Whatever arrangements may be made with respect to the office of distributor of stamps, lately held by Mr. ——, I do not feel myself justified in appropriating to myself any share of the local patronage of a county with which I have not the remotest connection by property, or any other local tie.

There are three members for the county of —— who support the government; and, in addition to the applications which I shall no doubt have from them, I have already received recommendations from the Duke of —— and Earl ——, each having certainly better claims than I have personally for local appointments in the county of ——.

I feel it quite impossible to make so complete a departure from the principles on which I have invariably acted, and which I feel to be nothing more than consistent with common justice, as to take ——shire offices for my own private purposes.

Very faithfully yours,
ROBERT PEEL.'

These letters show the noble principle on which Sir Robert's public life was founded. I am quite sure that he had a great regard for my sons. He invited them to his shooting-quarters, was pleased to find them amusement, and made them many handsome presents; but he steadily refused to enrich them out of the public purse merely because they were his nephews. Many prime ministers have not been so scrupulous."

And clearly *one* divine wishes Sir Robert Peel had not been so.

The changes of opinion which Sir Robert Peel underwent are often cited as indications of a want of conscientiousness. They

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really are, subject, of course, to the preceding remarks, proofs of his conscientiousness. We do not mean in the obvious sense of their being opposed to his visible interest, and having on two great occasions destroyed the most serviceable party organisation ever ruled by a statesman in a political age; but in a more refined sense, the timeliness of his transitions may, without overstraining, be thought a mark of their *bona fides*. He could not have changed with such felicitous exactness if he had been guided by selfish calculation. The problems were too great and too wide. There have, of course, been a few men,—Talleyrand or Theramenes are instances,—who have seemed to hit, as if by a political sense, the fitting moment to leave the side which was about to fall, and to join the side which was about to rise. But these will commonly be found to be men of a very different character from that of Peel. Minds are divided into open and close. Some men are so sensitive to extrinsic impressions, pass so easily from one man to another, catch so well the tone of each man's thought, use so well the opportunities of society for the purposes of affairs, that they are, as it were, by habit and practice, metrical instruments of public opinion. Sir Robert was by character, both natural and acquired, the very reverse. He was a reserved, occupied man of business. In the arts of society, in the easy transition from person to person, from tone to tone, he was but little skilled. If he had been left to pick up his rules of conduct by mere social perception and observation, his life would have been a life of miscalculations; instead of admiring the timeliness of his conversions, we should wonder at the perversity of his transitions. The case is not new. In ancient times, at a remarkable moment, in the persons of two selfish men of genius, the open mind was contrasted with the close. By a marvellous combination of successive manœuvres, Julius Cæsar rose from ruin to empire; the spoiled child of society—sensitive to each breath of opinion—ever living, at least, among the externals of enjoyment—always retaining, by a genial kindliness of manner, friends from each of the classes which he variously used. By what the vulgar might be pardoned for thinking a divine infatuation, Pompeius lost the best of political positions, threw away every recurring chance, and died a wandering exile. As a reserved ungenial man, he never was able to estimate the feeling of the time. "I have only to stamp with my foot when the occasion requires, to raise legions from the soil of Italy!" were the words of one who could not, in his utmost need, raise a force to strike one blow for Italy itself. The fate of Pompeius would have been that of Peel, if he too had played the game of selfish calculation. His changes, as it has been explained, are to be otherwise accounted for. He was always anxious to do right.

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An occupied man of business, he was converted when other men of business in the nation were converted.

It is not, however, to be denied, that a calm and bland nature like that of Peel is peculiarly prone to self-illusion. Many fancy that it is passionate imaginative men who most deceive themselves; and of course they are more tempted,—a more vivid fancy and a more powerful impulse hurry them away. But they know their own weakness. "Do you believe in ghosts, Mr. Coleridge?" asked some lady. "No, ma'am, I have seen too many," was the answer. A quiet calm nature, when it is tempted by its own wishes, is hardly conscious that it is tempted. These wishes are so gentle, quiet, as it would say, so "reasonable," that it does not conceive it possible to be hurried away into error by them. Nor *is* there any hurry. They operate quietly, gently, and constantly. Such a man will very much believe what he wishes. Many an imaginative outcast, whom no man would trust with sixpence, really forms his opinions on points which interest him by a much more intellectual process—at least has more purely intellectual opinions beaten and tortured into him—than the eminent and respected man of business, in whom every one confides, who is considered a model of dry judgment, of clear and passionless equanimity. Doubtless Sir Robert Peel went on believing in the corn-laws when no one in the distrusted classes even fancied that they were credible.

It has been bitterly observed of Sir Robert Peel, that he was "a Radical at heart;" and, perhaps with a similar thought in his mind, Mr. Cobden said once, at a League meeting, "I do not altogether like to give up Peel. You see he is a Lancashire man." And it cannot be questioned that, strongly opposed as Sir Robert Peel was to the Reform Bill, he was really much more suited to the reformed than to the unreformed House of Commons. The style of debating in the latter was described by one who had much opportunity for observation, Sir James Mackintosh, as "continuous animated after-dinner discussion.". The House was composed mainly of men trained in two great schools, on a peculiar mode of education, with no great real knowledge of the classics, but with many lines of Virgil and Horace lingering in fading memories, contrasting oddly with the sums and business with which they were necessarily brought side by side. These gentlemen wanted not to be instructed, but to be amused; and hence arose what, from the circumstance of their calling, may be called the class of conversationalist statesmen. Mr. Canning was the type of these. He was a man of elegant gifts, of easy fluency, capable of embellishing any thing, with a nice wit, gliding swiftly over the most delicate topics; passing from topic to topic like the *raconteur* of the dinner-table, touching easily on

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them all, letting them all go as easily; confusing you as to whether he knows nothing, or knows every thing. The peculiar irritation which Mr. Canning excited through life was at least in part owing to the natural wrath with which you hear the changing talk of the practised talker running away about all the universe; never saying any thing which indicates real knowledge, never saying any thing which at the very moment can be shown to be a blunder; ever on the surface, and ever ingratiating itself with the superficial. When Mr. Canning was alive, sound men of all political persuasions—the Duke of Wellington, Lord Grey—ever disliked him. You may hear old Liberals to this day declaring he was the greatest charlatan who ever lived, angry to imagine that his very ghost exists; and when you read his speeches yourself, you are at once conscious of a certain dexterous insincerity which seems to lurk in the very felicities of expression, and to be made finer with the very refinements of the phraseology. Like the professional converser, he seems so apt at the *finesse* of expression, so prone to modulate his words, that you cannot imagine him putting his fine mind to tough thinking, really working, actually grappling with the rough substance of a great subject. Of course, if this were the place for an estimate of Mr. Canning, there would be some limitation, and much excuse to be offered for all this. He was early thrown into what we may call an aristocratic debating society, accustomed to be charmed, delighting in classic gladiatorship. To expect a great speculator, or a principled statesman, from such a position, would be expecting German from a Parisian, or plainness from a diplomatist. He grew on the soil on which he had been cast; and it is hard, perhaps impossible, to separate the faults which are due to it and to him. He and it have both passed away. The old delicate parliament is gone, and the gladiatorship which it loved. The progress of things, and the Reform Bill which was the result of that progress, have taken, and are taking, the national representation away from the university classes, and conferring it on the practical classes. Exposition, arithmetic, detail, reforms,—these are the staple of our modern eloquence. The old boroughs which introduced the young scholars are passed away; and even if the young scholars were in parliament, the subjects do not need the classic tact of expression. Very plain speaking suits the "passing tolls," "registration of joint-stock companies," finance, the Post-office. The petty regulation of the details of civilisation, which happily is the daily task of our government, does not need, does not suit, a *recherché* taste or an ornate eloquence. As is the speech, so are the men. Sir Robert Peel was inferior to Canning in the old parliament; he would have been infinitely superior to him in the new. The aristocratic refinement, the nice embellish-

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ment, of the old time, were as alien to him as the detail and dryness of the new era were suitable. He was admirably fitted to be where the Reform Bill placed him. He was fitted to work and explain; he was not able to charm or to amuse.

In its exact form this kind of eloquence and statesmanship is peculiar to modern times, and even to this age. In ancient times the existence of slavery forbade the existence of a middle-class eloquence. The Cleon who possessed the tone and the confidence of the people in trade was a man vulgar, coarse, speaking the sentiments of a class whose views were narrow and whose words were mean. So many occupations were confined to slaves, that there was scarcely an opening for the sensible, moderate, rational body whom we now see. It was, of course, always possible to express the sentiments and prejudices of people in trade. It is new to this era, it seems created for Sir Robert Peel to express those sentiments, in a style refined, but not too refined; which will not jar people of high cultivation, which will seem suitable to men of common cares and important transactions.

In another respect Sir Robert Peel was a fortunate man. The principal measures required in his age were "repeals." From changing circumstances, the old legislation would no longer suit a changed community; and there was a clamour first for the repeal of one important act, and then of another. This was suitable to the genius of Peel. He could hardly have created any thing. His intellect, admirable in administrative routine, endlessly fertile in suggestions of detail, was not of the class which creates, or which readily even believes an absolutely new idea. As has been so often said, he typified the practical intelligence of his time. He was prone, as has been explained, to receive the daily deposits of insensibly-changing opinion; but he could bear nothing startling; nothing bold, original, single, is to be found in his acts or his words. Nothing could be so suitable to such a mind as a conviction that an existing law was wrong. The successive gradations of opinion pointed to a clear and absolute result. When it was a question, as in the case of the Reform Bill, not of simple abolition, but of extensive and difficult reconstruction, he "could not see his way." He could be convinced that the anti-Catholic laws were wrong, that the currency laws were wrong, that the commercial laws were wrong; especially he could be convinced that the *laissez-faire* system was right, and the real thing was to do nothing; but he was incapable of the larger and higher political construction. A more imaginative genius is necessary to deal with the consequences of new creations, and the structure of an unseen future.

This remark requires one limitation. A great deal of what is called legislation is really administrative regulation. It does

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not settle what is to be done, but *how* it is to be done; it does not prescribe what our institutions shall be, but directs in what manner existing institutions shall work and operate. Of this portion of legislation Sir Robert Peel was an admirable master. Few men have fitted administrative regulations with so nice an adjustment to a prescribed end. The Currency Act of 1844 was an instance of this. If you consult the speeches by which that bill was introduced and explained to parliament, you certainly will not find any very rigid demonstrations of political economy, or dry compactness of abstract principle. Whether the abstract theory of the supporters of that act be sound or unsound, no exposition of it ever came from the lips of Peel. He assumed the results of that theory; but no man saw more quickly the nature of the administrative machinery which was required. The separations of the departments of the Bank of England, the limitation of the country issues, though neither of them original ideas of Sir Robert's own mind, yet were not, like most of his other important political acts, forced on him from without. There was a general agreement among the received authorities in favour of a certain currency theory; the administrative statesman saw much before most men what was the most judicious and effectual way of setting it at work and regulating its action.

We have only spoken of Sir Robert Peel as a public man; and if you wish to write what is characteristic about him, that is the way to do so. He was a man whom it requires an effort to think of, as engaged in any thing but political business. Disraeli tells us that some one said that Peel was never happy except in the House of Commons, or doing something which had some relation to something to be done there. In common life we continually see some men as it were scarcely separable from their pursuits: they are as good as others, but their visible nature seems almost all absorbed in a certain visible calling. When we speak of them we are led to speak of it, when we would speak of it we are led insensibly to speak of them. It is so with Sir Robert Peel. So long as constitutional statesmanship is what it is now, so long as its function is the recording the views of a confused nation, so long as success in it is confined to minds plastic, changeful, administrative,—we must hope for no better man. You have excluded the profound thinker; you must be content with what you can obtain—the business-gentleman.

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Art. VII.—THE NOCTES AMBROSIANÆ.

Noctes Ambrosianæ. By Professor Wilson. In 4 vols. William Blackwood and Sons: Edinburgh and London, 1856. (Part of a collected re-issue of the Works of Professor Wilson, edited by his Son-in-law, Professor Ferrier.)

It was in the year 1817 that the late Mr. William Blackwood, publisher, of Edinburgh, started in that city a monthly periodical for the advocacy of Tory principles, in opposition to the *Edinburgh Review*, then at the height of its power under Jeffrey, and without an adequate Tory antagonist in Scotland. The new periodical was conducted for six months under the title of the *Edinburgh Monthly Magazine*, its editors being a Mr. Pringle and a Mr. Cleghorn, both of them men of some local reputation for talent, and both of them lame. The experiment, however, did not answer expectations; and Mr. Blackwood determined to discontinue it after the sixth number, and to bring out another magazine under more vigorous management. The young Tories of Edinburgh gathered round him; and, in October 1817, there appeared the first number of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. Among the contents of this number was the famous "Chaldee Manuscript;" a squib, in which, under the guise of a parody of the biblical language, Mr. Blackwood's difficulties in establishing the new magazine were described in ludicrous apocalypse, and war to the death was proclaimed between him and Mr. Constable, the publisher of the *Edinburgh*. "The Chaldee Ms.," says Mr. Ferrier, "fell on Edinburgh like a thunderbolt. It took the city by surprise. It was the first trumpet-note which dissolved the trance of Edinburgh and broke the spell of Whig domination." On reading the document itself, which Mr. Ferrier has kindly reprinted for us at the end of one of the present volumes, one can see that the prodigious local effect here attributed to it depended far less on any literary merit which it possessed than on the shock which it gave, on the one hand, to Presbyterian decorum by its daring mimicry of the scriptural style, and the wicked pleasure, on the other hand, which Presbyterians as well as other sinful folks feel in seeing well-known local persons mercilessly burlesqued. It was delightful, for example, for those who were familiar with the appearance of Mr. William Blackwood, to recognise him under the apocalyptic description of "a man clothed in plain apparel, whose name was, as it had been, the colour of ebony;" it was delightful to identify Mr. Constable as "the man

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who was crafty in counsel and cunning in all manner of working," and to interpret the "notable horn in his forehead wherewith he ruled the nations" as signifying the *Edinburgh Review;* and who that knew lame Mr. Pringle and lame Mr. Cleghorn could refrain from laughing on reading of them as "the two beasts who had faces like the faces of men," "the joints of whose legs were like the polished cedars of Lebanon," and the noise of whose departure from Mr. Blackwood's shop when they had concluded their agreement with him and pocketed his money, was "as it had been the noise of many chariots and of horsemen horsing upon their horses?" One can conceive that such a paper of personalities would make a sensation about Arthur's Seat, and that, as a manifesto of the new magazine, and a defiance to Jeffrey and the Edinburgh Whigs, it served its purpose admirably.

The "Chaldee Manuscript" was the joint work of several hands, who continued to be the chief contributors to the new magazine for a good many years. Among these was Professor Wilson, then simply Mr. John Wilson, but already well known in Edinburgh and elsewhere under that name. Born in 1788 at Paisley, the son of a rich manufacturer, he had received his education first at Glasgow, and then at Oxford; at which latter University he was distinguished no less for his literary genius and attainments,—as shown in his carrying off, among other honours, the Newdegate prize for an English poem,—than for the exuberance of his animal spirits, his great physical strength and beauty, and his fondness for all athletic sports and exercises. A fair-haired young Hercules-Apollo, and with plenty of money to enable him to gratify his tastes whatever they might be, he had scarcely left Oxford when he signalised his double character by purchasing the small but beautiful estate of Elleray, on Lake Windermere, where, as Hercules, he might yacht about at his pleasure, beat the best boatman at the oar, and wrestle or box with the strongest dalesman; and, as Apollo, he might revel in the quiet beauties of the finest of English scenery, indulge undisturbed in poetic dreams of his own, and cultivate with due reverence the society of Wordsworth. Here he married; here he spent days of happiness which he lived afterwards to remember; and here he took his place as one of the Lake Poets, by the publication, in his twenty-fifth year (1812), of the *Isle of Palms.* Reverses, not of a very serious nature, obliged him, after a little time thus spent, to choose a more active mode of life; and, breaking up his establishment at the Lakes, he removed to Edinburgh, and qualified himself for the Scottish bar. His prepossessions, both political and literary, led him to attach himself to the little band of young Tories, with Scott as a cau-

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tious veteran to advise them, who were disposed to break out in rebellion against Jeffrey's Whig supremacy in the northern world of letters; and accordingly, when Blackwood started his magazine to afford an outlet for native Scottish Toryism similar to that which had already been provided in the *Quarterly* for British Toryism in general, Wilson was one of the first to join him. He had then just added to his laurels as one of the Lakists by the publication (1816) of a second poem of some length, entitled *The City of the Plague;* his magnificent physique was the admiration of Edinburgh, so that as he walked hurriedly along Princes Street, in somewhat wild costume, and with his fair hair streaming from under his broad white hat, heads were turned to look at him; and his reputation in social circles was that of a young Goth of genius, with powers yet undeveloped which would one day astonish Britain. Woe to the camp of the Whigs when this young Alaric bounded in amongst them! So thought Mr. Blackwood and the Edinburgh Tories; and fortunately, once his hand was in, he remained with them. Even in the "Chaldee Manuscript," the idea of which and the first forty verses of the writing were Hogg's, while the rest was supplied by Wilson and Lockhart, Wilson is already described by anticipation (by Lockhart, we suppose) as the chief reliance of the new magazine. Among the "living things" which came to the man in plain apparel when he called them in his straits, "the first which came," says the Ms., "was after the likeness of the beautiful leopard from the valley of the palm-trees, whose going forth was comely as the greyhound, and his eyes like the lightning of fiery flame." More prosaically, so close did Wilson's connection with the magazine become, that, though Blackwood himself always retained the ultimate right in the management, Wilson was by universal repute regarded as the editor.

If the connection thus formed was important for *Blackwood,* it was not less important for Wilson. To it, or, at least, to it taken in conjunction with another event which shortly followed it—namely, his appointment in 1820 to the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, vacant by the death of Dr. Thomas Brown—is to be attributed, happily for himself, the permanent determination of his genius to prose rather than to verse. He did not, indeed, cease from verse, but continued to write new poetical pieces in the Lakist style, sufficient, when added to his former pieces, to swell his poetical works in 1825 to two octavo volumes in all—a quantity farther increased by occasional coquettings with the Muses during the rest of his life. But the demands of the magazine, not to speak of his professorship, were naturally for other kinds of matter than Lake poetry; and Wilson in supplying these demands gave exercise to faculties

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and broke into depths of his genius which he might have gone on versifying for ever, so far as appears from any competence he possessed in that line, without so much as disturbing or even finding out. He wrote tales for the magazine, in which, while his imagination had as free scope as it had in verse, his constitutional Scotticism, his shrewd observation of Scottish humours, his sensibility to the woes of real life, and his powers of eloquent description and delineation of character, had a still freer and more minute range. Some of these tales, with others written independently, formed collectively his first professed prose work, published in 1822, under the title of *Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life*, and followed in 1823 by a continuous one-volume novel called *The Trials of Margaret Lyndsay*. He wrote also political articles on the questions of the day, in which he blazed out as a Tory with a vengeance, and lashed the Whigs far and near, and tumbled them over by dozens, in a manner heartily satisfying to his instincts, and yet not possible had he kept to metre. He wrote literary criticisms, in which he advanced and expounded canons of taste, especially in poetry, deeper than those of Jeffrey, and vindicated against that critic and his disciples the poetic claims of Wordsworth and the writers associated with him. He wrote, either as lectures or as articles, subtle philosophical disquisitions, not very connected or systematic perhaps, but gleaming with brilliant ideas, and tinged throughout with that rich and highly-coloured mode of metaphysics which Coleridge was diffusing through England, but which had hardly till then ventured into the bleakness across the Tweed. It had been on the faith, indeed, of what he had done in this way in the earlier numbers of the magazine, as well as on the faith of his general reputation as a man of original mind, that he had been appointed to succeed Dr. Thomas Brown. Lastly, careless of the formality and sedateness conventionally identified with the gown of a Scotch Professor, and that gown the gown of Moral Philosophy, he wrote papers for the magazine, in which he was seen throwing the gown off and making a football of it, relapsing ideally into his character as an untrammelled human being, a bruiser at country-fairs, a sportsman on Scottish hills and rivers, a boon-companion among bacchanalians, commenting on men and manners, on life and literature, from the point of view of an inspired king of the gypsies, or from amid the uproarious conditions of a city orgie. Among these nondescript papers of riotous phantasy, the most famous were the series called the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*.

The origin of the *Noctes Ambrosianæ* lies in the mythical age of the magazine which they made illustrious; and Mr. Ferrier still leaves the matter somewhat dark. Suffice it to say that

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there was in Edinburgh, in a little back street going off from East Princes Street, a tavern kept by one Mr. Ambrose, an Englishman; that the Professor and his friends, in their occasional topographical researches in quest of suppers, had become acquainted with this tavern and its capabilities; and that, some time in the year 1822, it entered into their wicked heads to make this tavern the scene of imaginary convivial meetings, to be described in the magazine, in which all matters in heaven and earth, and especially the matters of the current month, should be humorously discussed in the interests of truth and Toryism. Accordingly, in 1822 the first of the *Noctes* appeared; and, the public liking the entertainment, the series was continued till the year 1835. During these thirteen years, seventy-one distinct papers appeared under the well-known title. Of these, however, only forty-one are republished in the volumes before us as the veritable *Noctes Ambrosianæ* of Professor Wilson; the other thirty being omitted as either not his or his only in part. Wilson, indeed, had been concerned with the *Noctes* from the first, and his hand may be "traced to a considerable extent" in some of the earliest of them. But for a while they were joint-stock productions by several hands, and were devoted chiefly to matters of local interest; and it was not till the nineteenth number, which was published in 1825, that Wilson made them his own, and gave them a development coextensive with his own powers and tastes. From that time, with but an occasional contribution from others when his own leisure failed, he conducted them single-handed, till the death of Hogg, the prototype of the principal colloquist in the imaginary brotherhood of Ambrosians, necessarily, or at all events naturally, brought them to a close.

Wilson was forty-seven years of age when the *Noctes* were concluded. He lived nearly twenty years longer; but though, during these twenty years, he still figured as Christopher North in *Blackwood*, and still, as "the Professor," was the lion of Edinburgh society, and the idol of successive classes of students, to whom he lectured, or rather panted, his queer Moral Philosophy from the backs of old letters, and who cheered him till the roof rang, as he shook his yellow mane and cried "Ugh" at the end of every eloquent period, he never hit upon a vein of literary manifestation in which he quite equalled his fame as the author of the *Noctes*. Accordingly, though the proper time for an estimate of his genius and literary career, as a whole, will be when Professor Ferrier has completed his labours as editor of the present re-issue of his entire works, and when his other son-in-law, Professor Aytoun, has given to the world the expected accompanying biography, readers of the volumes before us may be sure

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that they have Professor Wilson at his best. Mr. Ferrier virtually says as much when, after explaining the nature of the retrenchments by which he has excluded from the republication whatever was not entirely of Wilson's composition, he introduces it as follows:

"In consequence of these retrenchments, the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*—the most wonderful succession of creations to which the genius of Professor Wilson has given birth—will rise unencumbered to their rightful place in the literature of his country. Their peculiar characteristics will be then more distinctly observable when there is no alien matter to impair their continuity of excellence, or to obstruct their broad and intermingled flow of majesty and mirth. It will then be seen what unity of design pervades this wilderness of rejoicing fancies. It will be seen, even more clearly than when they first appeared, with what dramatic consistency—with what force and variety of thought—with what fervour of feeling—with what exuberance of humour—with what affluence of poetical imagery—and with what freedom and elasticity of language—these *Noctes Ambrosianæ* are sustained throughout; and it is not to be doubted that their second reception will be as enthusiastic as their first."

The world at large is not Professor Wilson's son-in-law; and it will naturally, therefore, desire to make up its own mind on the points here alluded to. Naturally, also, in making up its mind, it will distinguish between the *Noctes* in the original form of their presentation, as passing contributions to an Edinburgh periodical month after month between 1825 and 1835, and the *Noctes* as they now appear to claim a permanent place in the British literature of the present century.

Considered in the first aspect, the *Noctes* are certainly wonderful productions. In the annals of British magazine-writing we know nothing like them. It is Hugh Miller, we think, who has made the remark that original and powerful effects in literature, as well as in social arrangements, are generally produced by fresh men bred and trained out of the crowded circles of civilised and artificial life—barbarians and backwoodsmen, so to speak, who have been handling the axe and hunting the buffalo, and who then, by some chance, are led to leave these occupations and expend the energy of their unspoilt nerve in the very different business of cogitation and book-making. The remark may not stand the test of all the instances that could be alleged against it; but certainly there is something in it. As the waste of the population of large towns is supplied by continual recruiting from the country, and as civilisation itself is prevented from becoming stagnant and effete by periodical irruptions into it of barbaric vigour from the Scythian outfield; so it does seem as if something of the same kind took place in literature. Now and then, when litera-

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ture is becoming feeble and elegantly imitative, what is required to invigorate and refresh it seems to be the appearance of some stray Scythian in the charmed circle, prosecuting literature in a new manner. Now, though in a certain sense all provincial England may be regarded as, in this respect, a Scythian outfield attached to Middlesex as the traditional centre of British literature, yet the true literary Scythian of Britain, during the last eighty years, has been pre-eminently the Scot. The Scottish avatar in British literature may be said to have commenced with Burns. Till his time what Scotland had attempted in literature, except in mere imitation of English models, had not been much; but then she began, almost consciously, to infuse her comparatively barbaric vitality into the adjacent literature, which she had long contemplated with envy, and which, though by no means flagging within itself, was yet not unwilling at that juncture to receive a new element into it. Accordingly, since that time, there has been a series of eminent literary Scotchmen, each exercising considerable influence in British literature, in virtue not merely of his general assemblage of faculties and tastes, whatever they might be, by which he competed with contemporary Englishmen, but also, very visibly, of that underlying quality of constitutional Scotticism (to give it a vague name) which pervaded his faculties and tastes as an energizing force. Of these Scotchmen Wilson was one. *A priori*, indeed, Paisley is hardly the spot of Scottish earth to which Scotchmen themselves would look for the production of a characteristic specimen of Scottish manhood at its best; but these matters follow mystic laws; and probably the Paisley of 1788 was not Paisley as we now see it. At all events, Paisley did give birth to Wilson; and even a Paisley manufacturer. But if, on this account, there should be any doubt as to the healthy Scotticism of the man, only look at him! Such a large-limbed, blue-eyed, fair-haired specimen of the Teuton of the Scottish lowlands has not been seen since the Teutons first came into them. He is the kind of man that terrified the dark-skinned little Romans of Cæsar's legions when they first came in contact with the Germans, and saw their large succulent bodies, their *flavi capilli* and their *oculi cærulei*, and had to be told by Cæsar that bulk and barbaric valour were nothing against discipline. Why, it seems preposterous that such a man should betake himself to literature at all! Fitter he, one would think, to foot the heather in search of game, or to knock men down in the ring, than to bend over a desk with a pen in his hand and correct "copy." But this very fact, that he has nothing in him of the mere *littérateur*, but is, so to speak, a Scythian decoyed into literature by chance, and there deporting himself accordingly, is, as we have been saying, the key to his peculiar character even in literature. Hear

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himself, speaking through North and the Shepherd, on this very point:

"*North.* A mere literary man, James, is a contemptible creature. Indeed, I often wish that I had flourished before the invention of printing, or even of writing. What think you, James, of a *Noctes* in hieroglyphics?

"*Shepherd.* I scarcely ken; but I think ane wadna look amiss in the Chinese. Wi' respeck to mere literary men, O, dear me, sir! hoo I do gaunt [yawn] when they come out to Mount Benger! They canna shute, they canna fish, they canna loup [leap], they canna warsle [wrestle], they canna soom [swim], they canna put the stane, they canna fling the hammer, they canna even drive a gig, they canna kiss a lassie in an aff-haun and pleasant manner, without offendin her feelins; and, what's perhaps the most contemptible o' a', they canna, to any effeck, drink whusky. Ae glass o' pure speerits on the hill afore breakfast wad gie them a sick headache; and after denner, although the creturs hae nae objections to the jug, O, but their heads are wake, wake."

All the qualifications of humanity not yet decrepit and doomed to literature, thus enumerated by the Shepherd, were possessed by Wilson in perfection. He could shoot, he could fish, he could leap, he could wrestle, he could swim, he could *put* the stone, he could fling the hammer, he could drive a gig; and in his two remaining tests of manhood we daresay he was fully up to the mark. That such a man should have betaken himself to literature at all, might be considered, as we have said, but a freak of time and circumstance. Such *was* the freak, however; and Wilson had become a literary man. Broken in to the arts and sciences at Glasgow, and then partially anglicised at Oxford, he had contracted, as a kind of additional or cultured habit of his nature, that which he found to be the chief civilised aspiration of his time,—the aspiration after excellence in the bookish art. He, the Scottish athlete, the man of the hill and the heath, would show that it was not necessary to be a morbid and sallow hypochondriac, treating literature as if it were the sole interest in life, in order to achieve success even in that form of activity, and produce all the effects of which literary genius was capable. Curiously enough, his first efforts to make good this notion by practical illustration were in a kind of literature the least fitted, as one might have thought, for the display of those energies which constituted his strength and his difference from others—to wit, in soft Lakist poetry. Wilson's *Isle of Palms*, and his other early poems, are far enough from exhibiting any savage or barbaric vigour. They might very well have been written by some lily-handed young gentleman who could neither shoot, nor fish, nor drive a gig. They are all about moonshine, and balmy air, and white sails on the sea, and the ripple of lakes among

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woods, and angelic maidens with celestial hair, standing by the side of resplendent lovers. A languid and monotonous sweetness is their chief characteristic; and for strength or sinew, or any kind of true human interest, not to speak of excellence even in their own kind, they are not to be compared for a moment with the weakest poems of Wordsworth. For a man like Wilson to have made his *début* in such a style of composition was as if our ideal Scythian had selected, as his first experiment in civilised occupation, the employment of arranging artificial flowers, or of picking rose-leaves for the perfumers. In short, had Wilson stopped here, he could have been remembered only as the most feminine of the Lakists. But *Blackwood* and the Professorship came to his rescue, and he found his true element in prose. Here, while he could be soft and pathetic and Lakist when he chose, he could also break out in all directions to the full extent of his constitutional endowments. He could satirise, he could rave, he could philosophise, he could rollick in humour and phantasy, without any sense of restriction; he could deport himself altogether as a man, not only able to leap, and wrestle, and swim, and drive gigs, as well as write, but whose very peculiarity it was that he was bent on introducing the spirit of leaping, and wrestling, and swimming, and gig-driving, into literature. And, certainly, in his *Noctes*, above all, he showed what could be done in this way. It was a fresh and truly original mode of writing, which came into the midst of established British periodical literature, thirty years ago, like a blast from the hills. Not only was it bewildering to the literature of Middlesex—the literature, by the by, to which Wilson himself, as is shown by his incessant tirades against "the Cockney school," meant it, most of all, to be a contrast—it was equally a defiance to the literature of Scottish Whiggism, as represented in Jeffrey and the *Edinburgh Review*. It was Wilson's delight always to speak of the Whig as a sharp, shrill-voiced personage, addicted to literature professionally; and the Tory, as the being of more bass voice and larger physical capabilities, who carried all the humanities with him into literature, as into every thing else he did. What he thus said jocularly, he tried to illustrate. Able, keen, honest, and effective, as was the characteristic mode of thought of the *Edinburgh Review* at the time when Scottish Toryism started *Blackwood* as its antagonist, it was certainly more narrow, more superficial, less rich and various, than that which Wilson began to exhibit in competition with it in the pages of *Blackwood*. Had he been truly the representative of the Scottish Toryism of his day, he certainly would have vindicated for Scottish Toryism, by his literary appearances in its name, the possession of a larger and deeper mode of viewing men and things, and of a less shrill

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and peevish state of sentiment, than belonged to contemporary Scottish Whiggism. The literary judgments of *Blackwood*, for example, were intellectually far more profound and subtle, and in sentimental range far more wide, than those clear and often brilliant criticisms with which, for many years, Jeffrey had enlivened the *Edinburgh*. There was now, for the first time, on the other side of the Tweed, something like a representation of the high speculative tendency to which Coleridge had accustomed the best minds in England, as well as of the spirit and the doctrines of Wordsworth in poetry. Often, indeed, in special literary judgments *Blackwood* might be wrong, where the clear and candid Jeffrey kept the *Edinburgh* right; almost invariably too in social questions *Blackwood* was anti-popular; but in humour, in exuberant and jolly manliness, in all that, politics apart, could give satisfaction to the general public of Scottish, or even British readers, the Tory magazine, under Wilson's editorship, was certainly beginning to have the advantage of the Whig review. Had matters gone on so, Wilson might have gained his point; and Scottish Conservatism, with Scott and himself (both large fair-haired men) as its literary types, might have become identified with depth and manliness and imaginativeness and genial completeness of character, while the reputation reserved for Whiggism (dark hazel-eyed little Jeffrey figuring as its literary type) would have been that merely of rapid decision and sharp opinionativeness. As regards the Review, however, this result was prevented. About, or just before, the time when Jeffrey ceased his editorship, and when the *Noctes* had been going on for several years, men of a new generation, such as Carlyle and Macaulay, and Sir William Hamilton, began to write for the *Edinburgh*; whether they were themselves Whigs or not, what they did went to the credit of Whig capability; and thus Toryism was obliged to confess that all the profundity, the humour, and the big bone was not on its side, and the Whig organ had a new lease of life. Still it is to be remembered that Wilson had, in point of time, the precedence; and that these men came, so to speak, in the wave of his influence. Carlyle, for example, was seven years his junior, and might, while forming himself in secret by severer reading and rumination, have received also a healthy whiff in his solitude from *Blackwood* and the passing *Noctes*.

When the *Noctes* appeared, therefore, they were a novelty of the first order in British periodical literature. But even in this aspect of them, as ephemeral writings calculated for immediate impression, they were not without their faults. As a Scythian of genius appearing in civilised circles might still, despite the advantage he might have in his unsophisticated and undebilitated manhood, retain some habits of his old Scythian life which would

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not be altogether *comme il faut* in his new circumstances—might not, for example, have acquired quite the requisite degree of delicacy in personal habits, or quite the proper degree of fastidiousness in alluding to the anatomy and internal economy of his own body—so Wilson, though in the *Noctes* he brought a fulness and breadth of humanity into periodical writing which was not to be found in the contemporary periodical literature of Cockneydom, or in that of Edinburgh Whiggism, was yet not free from blame in respect of certain habits which he brought along with his merits.

What is to be considered coarseness or vulgarity is a matter varying much with time and latitude. What would have been coarseness in the Elizabethan times in England ceased to be coarseness in the age of the Restoration; much that in either age was accounted proper enough in our literature would now offend the least delicate taste; and our neighbours, the French, have quite a different standard of delicacy from us. But, certainly, within the memory of our literature as far back at least as Swift and the Revolution of 1688, and, we think also, within the memory of all our best and truest literature from Chaucer downwards, there has been no time in which such a passage as the following would not have been pronounced an offence against literary taste:

"Shiel, as he uttered those foul execrations [an attack upon the Duke of York in his last illness] was simply in the condition of a drunk street-blackguard, who, in attempting to spit in the face of some sickly gentleman well stricken in years, grew so sick with blue ruin as to spew—while a sudden blast of wind from an opposite direction blew the filth back with a blash all over his own ferocious physiognomy, forcing the self-punished brute, amidst the hootings of the half-mirthful, half-abhorring mob, to stoop staggering over the gutter, and, in strong convulsions, to empty his stomach into the common sewer."

Here it is North himself, and not the Shepherd, that speaks; so that the excuse of dramatic fitness, even if that were sufficient, cannot be offered. And though, the moment that the words have been uttered, the Shepherd himself is made to pronounce them "*coorse,*" and North to defend them against this charge by declaring them "too mild" for the occasion, and asking him or her who is dainty enough to think otherwise to fling Maga in the fire, and have done with it and North for ever; this is but braving out a misdemeanour by anticipation. The truth is, the *Noctes* are full of passages showing a like want of fastidiousness or even of ordinary sense of conventional decorum. Olfactory allusions, and allusions to the secretions and the digestive process, abound to an extent reminding one of the ancient reputation of Edinburgh, or the still more ancient reputation of

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Shoreditch or Billingsgate. Were we to collect instances, we could fill a page with mere adjectives and substantives, in the use of which Wilson revels, while the majority of writers regard them as belonging to that part of the English language which is necessary for the completeness of the dictionary as a register of terms for all objects and sensations known to exist, rather than for current service in speech or polite literature. This fault is not unfrequent with writers of some power defectively educated as regards the *convenances*. Evidently, however, the fault had no such origin in Wilson. A man belonging by birth to "good society," educated at Oxford, and trained in the most refined school of English poetry, he did not offend through deficient culture. Probably, in those days, the immediate Scottish circle of his readers may have had tastes less fastidious as regards allusions and images of the kind to which we refer than may now be supposed to prevail among lovers of literature on both sides of the Tweed. On the whole, however, it is evident that the habit in question was one form of Wilson's audacity, and that, looking with contempt on what he would have called "squeamishness," as part and parcel of the enervated constitution of a Whig-and-Cockney generation, he regarded an exhibition of the reverse as a sign of sound health and manly Toryism. But in any case he went too far. A gentleman in polished boots, with very white wristbands, and even rather punctilious about his hair, may have twice the physical strength of a coalheaver, and may prove it on occasion; and manliness and fastidiousness in writing are not irreconcilable. A man is not less of a man surely for hesitating to draw images from the sewer when he can at all avoid it, any more than he would be less of a man for hesitating personally to enter a sewer when there was no special reason why he should. The health in both cases would consist in overcoming the hesitation when the reason for doing so was peremptory. But in the *Noctes* the proportion of coarse language and allusion, whether by way of adding strength or of increasing jocosity, goes certainly beyond this; and this is one point in which Wilson contrasts unfavourably with Scott, or even (as we here understand coarseness) with Burns. In short, whatever elements of real superiority there were in Wilson's genius as a writer of the day over the contemporary magazine literature of Middlesex, and the contemporary literature of Whiggism in general, we cannot regard as one of them his greater readiness to pull out of the dictionary into his pages verbs, substantives, and adjectives of the class exemplified in the above extract.

Distinct from this fault, if our readers agree to consider it such, but exemplified strongly enough along with it in the same

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extract, was Wilson's habit of ferocious personality. Here perhaps he was not so peculiar in his day, for both the *Edinburgh Review* and the London periodicals were savage enough in their attacks on opponents; but here also, we think, he transgressed the customary bounds. And whether he transgressed the customary bounds or not, he transgressed the bounds of right and reason. The theory of the proper limits of personal antagonism in literature might be a subject for interesting discussion. In becoming a writer one does not cease to be a man; on the contrary, the highest notion of the literary function is that it is one mode of activity through which a man may give expression to all that is in him—his hatred and his contempt included. There are conceivable cases, therefore, in which a man might deliberately set himself against another through the press in the position of his mortal enemy; might resolve to run him down as a sleuth-hound, and might labour, as far as the law of libel allowed, for his defeat and overthrow. If, for example, one man believed another to be thoroughly bad, an incarnation of all that was mischievous, and personally an obstacle in the way of right and truth, it might be natural, and possibly right, to desire to get at once to the back of the man's opinions so as to smite the man himself. In minor cases, too, it might be an economy of argument to prove an antagonist odious or ridiculous. Assuming this, however, it is still necessary, in any instance where the benefit of such an assumption may be pleaded in behalf of what are called personalities, that the allegations which constitute the personalities shall be at once true and relevant. Now, wherever the allegations do not consist of independently known matters of fact, but of inference from the very circumstance of the existing opposition of opinion between him who attacks and him who is attacked, they are, in fact, a *petitio principii;* and their legitimacy in respect of truth can only be determined along with the controversy then pending. Where the controversy is one between obvious right and obvious wrong, between obvious wisdom and obvious idiotcy, a strong and rather direct style of personal reprobation is readily forgiven. When Wilson himself, for example, in describing the execution of the murderer Burke, lauds the multitude for their execrations of him on the scaffold, and even dwells on the picture of the murderer in the torments of hell,—the ferocity of the personality, if so it may be called, will be justified to most by the decided conviction that Wilson was in the right in *that* debate. So also, the scurrilities of Milton in his prose-pamphlets against Salmasius and More count for little in a controversy where Milton's soul was so moved, and where so much was at stake. But the personalities in the *Noctes* which most attract notice were in the interest of no more vital contro-

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versy than that between Whiggism and Toryism. It is one of the most pitiful things in the history of the British mind that this poor controversy—a controversy which, whatever its necessity and whatever its merits, is certainly as little to be identified with the one eternal controversy between Ormuzd and Ahriman as any on record—should, during the hundred and seventy years which have elapsed since Dryden's time, have acted as the chief polarising influence in British literature. So it has been, however; and since 1688, the antithesis between Whiggism and Toryism has been almost a necessary form of thought in our island, and generation after generation our writers have deemed it a law of nature that they should divide right and left, like two flocks of sheep, into Whig writers and Tory writers. Of late we have been recovering from this miserable bondage; and now-a-days our best intellectual men, unless in cases where their very profession leads them into polemics, are not recognised, and do not recognise themselves, as either Tories or Whigs. Certainly if ever a soul was constituted by nature to require this freedom from any badge or party, it was that of Wilson. But, in his instance, time and place were adverse—time, for he was at his prime when the Whig and Tory controversy was peculiarly rampant, and when the Reform Bill had not yet come to cashier literary talent from its paying connection with parliamentary parties, and cast it loose for more spontaneous work; and place, for of all cities in the empire Edinburgh was then the fiercest in its political dissensions. We have only to read Lord Cockburn's reminiscences of Edinburgh society in the early part of the present century to see that Edinburgh Whiggism then was a matter of life and death; and something of the same vitality that characterised the Whig revolt against Lord Melville's rule at the time when Jeffrey began his career, characterised also the Tory reaction fifteen years later, when Wilson and *Blackwood* rallied the Tory ranks. Plunging into the midst of affairs as he found them, Wilson had to take one side or the other, as a matter of course; the balance of his constitution assigned him to the Tories, and, once with them, there was no half-heartedness in his style of service. He rioted in Toryism as he did in every thing else; and though, all the while, he was laughing with himself at his own fury, and quite as conscious as any one could be that his hatred of Whiggism was a kind of literary simulation to promote the public fun and keep the ball incessantly going, yet often he was betrayed by the excess of his simulation into real acts of malevolence and rancour. When he represents all Whig men as having small heads and sharp pecky voices, and all Whig women as having brazen faces and splay feet, one can relish the wicked generality of the joke; but when, in the sheer reckless-

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ness of strong speech, he attacks Hazlitt as "something bestial," and pours out against Macaulay a torrent of such epithets as "prig," "impertinent puppy," "a bit barrister," "the son of a saint, insidious as a serpent, but fangless as the glow-worm," "an obscure cipher," and the like, one feels that the limits of endurable invective are passed. Let us quote an example at length:

"*Shepherd.* O man! I wadna be that Macaulay for ony money. Hoo sma' he looks! hoo sma' he sings! and hoo sma' he maun feel in the preevat consciousness and the public conviction o' ha'in deliberately traduced sic a man as Mr. Soothey! without ony ither provocation, I jalouse, than the sense o' inferiority, that keeps gnawin like a veeper at the veetals o' the envious, and licks up party spite, or rather party spittle, a foul and fetid foam that drenches the worm's fangs—if it has gotten ony—and a' worms hae organs o' some sort or ither for bitin—in a poison that only the mair blackens and embitters its ain rotten heart."

This, we repeat, is the mere recklessness of an acquired habit of strong speech, and no man could, on occasion, be more generous to political opponents than Wilson. "The animosities are mortal," was his own magnificent saying; "but the humanities live for ever." Accordingly, at the very time when he was mauling some of the Whigs with personalities such as we have quoted, he was paying tributes of unstinted praise to the genius of others; while even of those who were the objects of his invectives in these *Noctes*, many lived to know the man more closely, and to understand the spirit of sheer waywardness in which the invectives were uttered. This very rhetorical levity in the habit of abuse, however, made it the less excusable as a literary fault.

The faults which we have noted may have increased the sensation made by the *Noctes* on their first appearance. The strength of that sensation, we have said, it is difficult for us in these cooler days of abundant periodical literature adequately to imagine. How the successive papers were run after! In Scotland, in particular, how they were read and admired; and how they were imitated in all kinds of local clubs of young men, where it became the fashion to burlesque each other, and discuss the topics of the day in papers of humorous dialogue, read aloud by the secretary after the debate or essay, or other serious business of the meeting. In England, too, the *Noctes* set the example of a new literary form, still kept up, with variations, in most of our magazines.

Those days are gone. A new generation of readers has grown up, to whom the *Noctes* are known only by tradition; and as they reappear among us, with Professor Ferrier's notes

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and elucidations in these four volumes, they are like the old palmer-knights in the stories, returned from the Holy Land after twenty years of absence, and waiting, disguised as beggars, at the gates of their own castles, somewhat curious as to the welcome they may receive, and as to the fidelity of their ladies during so long a widowhood. In this case, however, there is no need of fear. Many suitors have come and gone,—some of them handsome and noble enough; the lady, too, is more staid, and her thoughts have latterly been turned towards the cloister; but one glance is enough; long-lost and in strange disguise Sir Christopher cannot yet deceive that loving and familiar eye; the news spreads through the castle that their lord has come back; and as the stalwart traveller, still in his palmer's dress, walks through the court-yard with his wife leaning on his arm to take possession of his own, lo, already an avenue of servants cheering and bowing low! In plain English, the *Noctes Ambrosianæ,* as a reprint, will lose nothing of their fame. Those who already knew them in the magazine, will be glad to renew their acquaintance with them; and, as for the new generation, they will hardly know, till they read, what a treat is in store for them. To all ages, a genuinely good book is about as true a pleasure as life affords, all the truer perhaps from its being so rare; but even as regards the capacity for this enjoyment, one envies the younger generation:

> "Still are they equal—fit for weeping or for laughter,
> The flight they still admire the flash with pleasure see;
> Who finished is, is scarce worth looking after;
> The growing one will always thankful be."

To young Britons in this happy stage of development, the *Noctes* may be recommended as "fine growing" literature; and if the elderly can hardly be expected quite to equal the young in their enjoyment, even they in reading will have a feeling of rejuvenescence.

The *Noctes,* first of all, have the merit belonging to all works of the creative order, of having by their general scheme and construction added to the number of that invisible population of imaginary beings, each with a name, a character, and an appropriate environment of circumstance, with which genius has peopled the "realm of the ideal." The invention of a Hamlet or a Falstaff is one of the greatest feats of the human mind; and as metaphysicians define a *thing* to be simply a *thinkable,* who knows but in so adding to the number of our thinkable fellow-beings in this universe our poets are, in fact, creating *things?* At all events, when from any book, whether in prose or in verse, there takes place a flight of new characters of some mark and importance into that aerial population of Hamlets, Falstaffs,

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Pantagruels, Meisters, Redgauntlets, and Little Nells, a numerical census of which would defy our arithmetic, though the most prominent figures in it might be counted, this, of itself, is a credit to the author. Such a flight has been yielded by the *Noctes Ambrosianæ*. The figures are few, and they fly rather heavily; but their physiognomies once seen are apt to be remembered. First there is Christopher North himself with his crutch, the "old man eloquent," wise, and patriarchal, yet awfully capacious of meat and drink and fun. Next is Timothy Tickler (a free paraphrase, Mr. Ferrier tells us, of a Mr. Robert Sym, of Edinburgh, a maternal uncle of Professor Wilson), an erect gentleman of the old school, seven feet high, punctilious and rather sceptical, but sound to the core. Lastly (not to mention Ambrose himself, the English Opium-eater, and other personages introduced only occasionally or incidentally), there is the Ettrick Shepherd. The Shepherd, as all know, is the glory of the *Noctes*. Mr. Ferrier thus speaks of him:

"The Ettrick Shepherd of the *Noctes Ambrosianæ* is one of the finest and most finished creations which dramatic genius ever called into existence. Out of very slender materials, an ideal infinitely greater and more real, and more original than the prototype from which it was drawn, has been bodied forth. Bearing in mind that these dialogues are conversations on men and manners, life and literature, we may confidently affirm that nowhere within the compass of that species of composition is there to be found a character at all comparable to this one in richness and readiness of resource. In wisdom the Shepherd equals the Socrates of Plato; in humour he surpasses the Falstaff of Shakespeare."

Mr. Ferrier ought not to have written extravagance like this; which, however, is only in keeping with the style of his notes to the *Noctes*—notes written under the evident impression that these articles in *Blackwood's Magazine* were in reality the most important things in the history of the British Empire, if not of the whole planet, during the ten years over which they extended, and that in future times every man, woman, and event belonging to that period would be remembered in the exact proportion to their traceable degree of relation to this vertebral phenomenon of the age. But, setting Mr. Ferrier's exaggerations aside, the Shepherd is a glorious personation. He deserves to stand as one more in the series of great comic creations bequeathed to the world by such men as Aristophanes, and Plautus, and Rabelais, and Shakespeare, and Cervantes, and Scott. In the very conception of him there was something audacious. There was a real Ettrick Shepherd, by no means a common man, and known, at the very time when the *Noctes* were written, as a contributor to *Blackwood*, and one of the occasional literary lions of Edin-

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burgh society. Using him as a foundation, Wilson—by a liberty which, had Hogg been in any way his match, or had he possessed self-respect enough to resent it, might easily have led to a quarrel—built up, by successive efforts, his ideal Ettrick Shepherd of the *Noctes;* the two Shepherds, the real and the ideal, lived together for ten years in the eye of the public; it was not till the real Shepherd was laid in his coffin that his phantom was dismissed into the shades; and even now the phantom and the reality confuse each other.

The plan of the *Noctes* is as lax as possible. It is that of mere symposium and accompanying dialogue. The three collocutors —North, Tickler, and the Shepherd—meet (sometimes with a fourth person, such as the Opium-eater, to bear them company), either in Ambrose's tavern or any where else, in town or in country, on land or on water, where the whim leads them, but always as the Ambrosian brotherhood, and generally with Ambrose himself in attendance; before them are set all sorts of conceivable Scottish comestibles in quantities perfectly monstrous, accompanied and followed by liquids in proportions as monstrous, and especially whisky-punch; of these they eat and drink like ogres, talking meanwhile like gods—North and Tickler in English, and the Shepherd in broad Scotch; occasionally they grow maudlin, or fall asleep, or blacken each other's faces, or leap over the tables by way of variation; and always just as they break up, Gurney the shorthand-writer sneaks from his hiding-place where he has heard all that has been said, and goes away to extend his notes. There is nothing like plot or construction here; nor is there any pretension to it. The impression of power depends, and is meant to depend, almost solely on the dialogue.

A considerable proportion of the effect of the dialogue arises from the quantity of miscellaneous disquisitional matter imbedded in it, in the shape either of shrewd opinion, or of subtle philosophical doctrine, or of keen literary criticism. This disquisitional matter is contributed pretty equally by all the speakers—North himself or De Quincey doing the expressly philosophical part; Tickler throwing in remarks as a gentleman who has seen the world; and the Shepherd irradiating all with flashes of extempore metaphysics, or the light of plain common sense. By way of a single specimen under this head take the following: it is evidently an exposition of a fixed article in Wilson's own psychological creed.

IMAGINATION AND INTELLECT: POETRY AND SCIENCE.

"*North.* Imagination, my dear James, as you, who possess it, must know, is intellect working according to certain laws of feeling or passion. A man may have a high intellect with little or no imagination;

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but he cannot have a high imagination with little or no intellect. The intellect of Homer, Dante, Milton, and Shakespeare, was higher than that of Aristotle, Newton, and Bacon. When elevated by feeling into imagination, their intellect became transcendent; and thus were they poets. * * *

Shepherd. You're a curious cretur, sir.

North. Pray, what is science? True knowledge of mind and matter, as far as it is permitted to us to know truly any thing of the world without and the world within us, congenial in their co-existence.

Shepherd. That soun's weel, and maun be the richt definition. Say on—you've a pleasant vice.

North. What is poetry? The true exhibition in musical and metrical speech of the thoughts of humanity when coloured by the feelings, throughout the whole range of the physical, moral, intellectual, and spiritual regions of being.

Shepherd. That's shooblime. I wuss I could get it aff by heart to spoot at the petty soopies o' the Blues. But I fear that I suld forget some o' the prime words—the fundamental features on which the feelosophical definition hinges, and fa' into ower great nonsense."

There are many things of this kind in the volumes, clearly intended to be received as Wilson's own doctrinal conclusions, though the formality is happily carried off, as in a kind of irony, by the Shepherd's humorous interjections.

After all, however, the grand peculiarity of the *Noctes*, that which distinguishes them from the bulk of British prose-literature past and present, consists not in the mere propositional matter or matter of doctrine and opinion which they contain in such abundance—their thoughts on politics, on philosophy, and on literature, and their references, serious and satirical, to the men and incidents of the time—but in their being a splendid example on a large scale of what may be called prose-poetry or prose-phantasy. By a law of habit, it has become a settled conviction that the highest literary exercises of the imagination and of the feelings should be reserved for verse, and are only possible in verse. The business of exposition and investigation of all kinds is willingly assigned to prose; to prose also is assigned almost exclusively the work of history or record; even for the expression of feeling within a certain range, and the work of moral exhortation, prose is deemed sufficient; nor is such a moderate exercise of the imaginative faculty as is required for the construction of the plot of a novel, and the connected narration of its incidents, regarded as beyond the capacities of prose. But wherever feeling and imagination interblend at their highest, wherever the matter of the phantasy becomes extreme and highly ideal, or unusually rich and intense, there prose is supposed to be incompetent, and the creation is required to be in the form of a verse. Now, without arguing as to the amount of real

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truth that there may be in this traditional belief, it is enough to say that in the opinion of many it has been overstrained, and that on the part of not a few writers there has been a disposition to bring it into discredit by showing how successfully prose may invade the supposed domain of rhyme and metre. Jean Paul in Germany, De Quincey and Carlyle and also Mr. Dickens and Mr. Kingsley and Mr. Ruskin in Britain, have given to the world specimens of imaginative and impassioned prose, comparable in many respects to the highest efforts of the poets in verse, and properly enough, therefore, entitled to the designation of prose-poetry; which prose-poetry, as a mode of literature, is seen, too, in their hands, to possess one advantage over its analogue in verse, making up in a great degree for its shortcoming in respect of sustained and supreme artistic beauty,—to wit, the liberty of interfusing at pleasure and to any extent the elements of the humorous, the dialectic, and the historical. In prose-poetry, so understood, Wilson was certainly one of our greatest masters. He had the theory of prose-poetry; and he certainly was a far greater poet in his prose than in his verse. Even in the select company of those who might be enumerated as our prose-poets he has a peculiar place—not only as having practised the mode of literature under notice on so large a scale, but also as having practised an almost unique fashion of it. As a specimen, for instance, of what may be called the savage-sublime in literature, the *Noctes* are all but unparalleled. They are prose-poetry of the Teutonic order, as distinct from the classical. Without attempting a strict classification of the various species of poetical effort in prose of which they furnish examples, we may call attention to two kinds of passages from which selections might be made to any extent, by way of illustrative extracts—passages of description, whether of natural scenery or of artificial objects; and passages of sheer ideal whimsy, in which the sublime is mingled with the grotesque. Passages of the former kind, showing the unabated Lakist enthusiasm of the writer for cloud and landscape, are distributed between the speeches of North and those of the Shepherd; but in almost all the passages of the second kind the Shepherd is the speaker. Out of an absolute *embarras de richesses* in both kinds, let us cull one or two specimens.

"A SPRING-SHOWER.

North. Something very beautiful might be written about weather—climate.

Shepherd. But no by you—by me. Oh! heavens and earth! O God and man! what I—a shepherd—hae felt in a spring-shower! The dry warld a' at ance made dewy—dewy—dewy as the light in the Angel o' Mercy's een, beheld by contrite sinner in a midnight dream.

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North. James, your paw.

Shepherd. A saft, fresh, silent change has been wrocht a' ower the outward creation—and a congenial change—as saft, as fresh, as silent, has likewise been wrocht within your ain heart. Music is maist harmonious—but not mair harmonious nor licht; for licht wears a coat o' many colours—and lo! yonder is the web from which it was cut—hung aloft in the skies.

North. There spake at once the Ettrick Shepherd and the Tailor of Yarrow-Ford!

Shepherd. The Rainbow! Is she not the Lady o' Licht, the Queen o' Colour, the Princess o' Prisms, the Heiress Apparent o' Air, and her Royal Highness of Heaven? O Thou! who bendest Beauty like a bridge across the valley—on which imagination's eye may ken celestial shapes moving to and fro alang the braided battlements—Sun-begotten, Cloud-born Angel! Emblem, sign, and symbol of mercy and of peace! Storm-seeker and storm-subduer! Pathway—so sacred Superstition sings—between Heaven and Earth! Alike beautiful is thy coming and thy going—and no soul so savage as not for a while to soften, as thy Apparition comes gradually breathing and blushing out of the sky! Immortal art thou in thy evanescence! The sole light, either in heaven or on earth, of which the soul may not sicken when overcome with the agonies of grief or guilt! O that on my death-bed I may behold a Rainbow!

North. Nay, James, the jug is empty; and at that moment, with the sudden jerk of your arm, expecting a heavier load on the way to your mouth, you had nearly given yourself a bloody nose. Be more cautious in future—but replenish.

Shepherd. In a single instant, a' the earth is green as emerald, and covered wi' a glorious glitter o' its ain, sic as never shone—or could shine, over the bricht but barren sea. A's joy: The knowes, the banks, the braes, the lawns, the hedges, the woods, the single trees, the saughs, the heather, the broom, the bit bushes, the whins, the fern, the gerse, the flowers, the weeds—sic as dockens, nettles, ay, the verra hemlock—are a' harmless and a' happy! They seem a' imbued wi' a sort o' strange serene spirit o' life, and naught in a' creawtion seems—dead.

North. Life-imbued by a poet's soul!

Shepherd. Then look at the animal creturs. Isna that a bonny bit beastie, cavin its large-ee'd gracefu' head in the air, frae the elastic turf liftin up and lettin doun again its lang thin legs sae elegantly, its tail a' the while a perfeck streamer—in many a winding ring it gallops round its dam—and then, half-frolicsome, half-afraid, returns rapidly to her side, and keeps gazing on the stranger. Some day or ither that bit silly foal wull be wunnin a king's plate or a gold cup; for you see the Aurab bluid in his fine fetlocks, and ere long that neck, like his sire's, will be clothed with thunder.

North. You must ride him yourself, James, next year at Musselburgh.

Shepherd. Fling your crutch, sir, intil a rose-bush, till a' the blos-

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soms flee intil separate leaves, and a' the leaves gang careerin in air outower the lea, and that would be an eemage o' the sudden flicht o'a heap o' snaw-white lambs, a' broken up in a moment as they lay amang the sunshine, and scattered far and wide o'er the greensward—sune to be regathered on the Starting-Knoll; but there the eemage wunna haud, for rose-leaves ance dissipated dee like love-kisses lavished in dreams.

North. Rose-leaves and rose-lips—lambs and lasses—and love-kisses lavished in dreams! And all these images suggested in a shepherd's recollection of a Spring-shower! Prevailing pastoral Poet, complete thy picture.

Shepherd. See how the trouties are loupin in the pools—for a shower o' insecks hae come winnowing their way on the wings o' the western wind, frae the weel-watered wavings o' Elibank's whisperin woods.

North. No such imitative melodies in Homer! The sentence is like a sugh.

Shepherd. 'Twas nae faut o' mine, sir, for ma mouth got fou o' double-Ws—and I had to whiff and whustle them out. But hush and list, sir—list and hush! For that finest, faintest, amaist evanescent music—merry, or mournful, just as ye may be disposed to think and feel it—but now it is merry—dear me! it's clean gane—there—there it is heard again—like the dying tone o' the sma'est cord o' the harp o' an angel happy in the heart o' the highest heavens—and what may it be—since our ears are too dull to hear seraphic string or strain—but the hymn, to us amaist hushed by the altitude—although still pourin and pourin out like a torrent—o' the lyrical Laverock, wha, at the first patterin o' the spring-shower upon the braird about his nest, had shot, wi' short, fast-repeated soarings, a-singing up the sky, as if in the delirium o' his delicht he would hae forsaken the earth for ever—but wha, noo that he has reached at last the pinnacle o' his aerial ambition, wull sune be heard descendin, as if he were naething but a sang—and then seem a musical speck in the sky—till again ring a' the lower regions wi' his still loud, but far tenderer strains—for soarin he pours, but sinkin he breathes his voice, till it ceases suddenly in a flutter and a murmur ower the head o' his brooding mate—lifted lovingly up wi' its large saft een to welcome her lover-husband to their blessed nest!"

"THE SHEPHERD BLOWING SOAP-BUBBLES.

Shepherd. I hae nae tale to tell; but it sae happened that I had never heard tell o' blawing saip-bubbles frae a pipe till I was aucht year auld—the maist poetical æpok perhaps in the life o' a great untaucht original genius.

Tickler. Millions of poets are cut off ere they reach that epoch!

Shepherd. And mony million mair by teethin——

Tickler. And the gripes.

Shepherd. That's tautology—teethin includes the gripes—though you may hae forgotten't; but great wits hae short memories—that's proverbial—sae let me proceed.

Tickler. Wet your whistle.

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Shepherd. My whustle's never dry. I had seen a lassie doin't; and though she couldna do't weel, yet even sic bubbles as she blew—she was a verra bonny bit lassie—appeared to my imagination mair beautifu' than ony ither sicht my een had ever beheld—no exceppin the blab o' hinny that I used to haud up atween me and the licht, afore I sooked it, after I had flung awa, in twa halves, the bumbee that had gathered it partly frae the clover and partly frae the heather-floures.

Tickler. How amiable is infant cruelty!

Shepherd. And how detestable the cruelty o' auld age! That verra day I took up the saip—I remember the shape and size o' the cut at this moment—and bat a bit aff—makin it appear by the nibblin o' my teeth, as if the thief had been a mouse.

Tickler. How amiable is infant hypocrisy!

Shepherd. Whare was ye last nicht, you auld Archimawgo? I then laid hauns on a new pipe my faither had brocht frae Selkirk in a present for my mother—for the cutty was worn down to an inch, and had ower strong a smell even for the auld wives; but as for my mother, she was then in the prime o' life, and reckoned verra like the Duchess; and havin provided mysel wi' a tea-cup and a drap water, I stole out intil what ance had been the garden o' Ettrick Ha', and sat doun aneath ane o' the elm-trees, as big then as they are noo—and in solitude, wi' a beatin heart, prepared my suds. I quaked a' the same as if I had been gaun to do something wickit—

North. Shakespearean.

Tickler. Nothing equal to it in Massinger.

Shepherd. Wi' a trummlin heart—indeed a' in a trummle—I put the mooth o' the pipe as gently's I could on the precious saip-and-water, and it sooked in the wee bells till they a' made but ae muckle bell, on which depended a' my happiness for that day at least, for in my agitation I let the tea-cup fa'—though thank God it didna break—and a' my hopes were in the bole o' that pipe, and it was limited to that ae single charge! I drew in my breath—and I held in my breath—wi' the same sort o' shiver that a wean gies afore gaun into the dookin—and then I let out ae sigh after anither sigh—hainin my breath—when oh! ineffable and inconceivable happiness! the bells grew intil bubbles! and the bubbles intil balloons! and the balloons intil meteors! and the meteors intil moons! a' irradiated wi' lustre, a thousand times mair mony-coloured than the rainbow—each in itsel a wee glorious globe o' a warld—and the beautifu' series followin ane anither up the air, as if they were sailin awa to heaven. I forgot utterly that they were saip-suds, and thocht them what they seemed to be—creturs o' the element! till first ane and then anither—ah waes me! gaed out—and left me staunin forlorn wi' my pipe in my haun aneath the auld elm-tree, as if the warld I breathed in was altered back intil what it was before—and I, Jamie Hogg, again at ance a schoolboy and a herd, likely to get his licks baith frae Mr. Beattie the dominie, and auld Mr. Laidlaw—instead o' muntin up to heaven as the bubbles munted up to heaven, to find our hame in the sky! I looked sideways to the houses—and there was my mother fleein

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towards me—shakin her nieve, and ca'in me 'Sorrow'—and demandin hoo I daured to meddle wi' that pipe? The stalk at that moment broke into ten pieces in my hand! and the head o' the pipe, pale as death, trundled at my feet. I felt my crime to be murder—and without a struggle submitted to my mother, who gave me my paiks, which I took as silent as a fox. Sevère disenchantment! Yet though my ears tingled, when I touched them, till bed-time, I was an unreformed sinner in sleep—and blew dream-saip-bubbles frae a visionary pipe up the ether of imagination, uninterrupted, unterrified, and unpunished by any mortal mother—dream-saip-bubbles far transcendin in purest loveliness even them for which I had wept."

From these extracts it will be seen that all the highest work of the *Noctes* falls to the Shepherd. And this leads us to note, as one other peculiarity about these compositions in their present form as a substantial addition to our permanent literature, the circumstance that they are a new specimen—and perhaps the last specimen on a large scale that the world can expect—of the use of the Scottish dialect for literary purposes. The Scotch of Wilson, as put into the mouth of the Ettrick Shepherd, is quite as genuine and natural and rich as that of either Burns or Scott, and possesses qualities of its own, showing that even these great masters of the national dialect had not fathomed all its resources. The fact that it was in this dialect, so uncouth to the English ear, that Wilson, Oxford man and practised English writer as he was, achieved his highest literary successes, is not unworthy of remark. It proves a certain deep congeniality between his whole intellectual mode and nature and the forms of phraseology which the Scottish language provided. It is as if, associated with the Scottish language and bound up with its very being, there were a certain traditional cast of thought incapable of being efficiently maintained in any other *ensemble* of linguistic conditions, and as if in this cast of thought Wilson was most at home. What that cast of thought is, it might be difficult to define. To a great extent its speciality seems to consist in a vein of self-irony—an incessant tendency to the humorous in the midst of the serious. But whatever that mode of intellect is for which the Scottish dialect was the appropriate medium, it seems decreed that it shall either disappear from British literature, or have to exert itself under the disadvantages of translation. In these *Noctes*, probably (but there is no certainty in such matters), we have the last extensive exhibition of the Scottish language in literature. Curiously enough, it is English authors, rather than Scotch, that seem bent at present on continuing the occasional use of the Scottish dialect in British books. Mr. Kingsley's Sandy Mackaye in *Alton Locke* is one out of several recent instances that might be quoted. Should any of our English readers, ap-

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proving of this *penchant*, desire a few lessons in the Scottish dialect, they cannot do better than make a study of the *Noctes*, with the help of Professor Ferrier's glossary of Scottish terms appended to the present edition of them.

We have dilated sufficiently on the merits of the volumes before us to convey our impression that in virtue of them alone, apart from his other numerous writings, Wilson deserves the place which has been generally accorded to him as a man of true genius and one of the greatest British writers of the present century. Were we again, in conclusion, to revert to the negative side, we should have to point out how that frequent coarseness of speech and that exaggerated license of personal invective which marred the real worth of the *Noctes* even on their first appearance, detract still more from their literary perfection as writings destined for a longer existence. On these points, however, we have already said enough; and, after all, these were perhaps only forms of what may be noted in conclusion as the prevailing defect not only of the *Noctes*, but of Wilson's whole literary life—his tendency to expatiate and luxuriantly efflorescence rather than to concentrate, compress, and elaborate. It was Goethe who used to insist on a certain habit, which he called *specification*, as essential to the greatest success in all attempts in art or literature, and ultimately to the enduring influence of any artist or author in respect of his whole career when completed. If we remember aright, it was by way of warning his young fellow-countrymen against the example of such irregular and lawless writers as Jean Paul that he used to utter this remark. The idea likely to be propagated by such an example was, he thought, that a great literary work ought to be a kind of fantasia of thoughts, humours, and imaginations woven together anyhow; and against that idea he entered his protest. It was the business of the literary man, he said, to impart to all his works a certain character and direction corresponding to what was special in his own individuality; and this could only be done by repressing the general, and severely cultivating the specific in all that one wrote. In this habit of specification, concentration, or whatever we may call it, Wilson was certainly deficient. He rioted and luxuriated in the use of his powers; but prescribed for them no distinct succession of definite tasks, and submitted them to no rigorous discipline. Hence, in his speculative thinking, with all its subtlety, a want of that iron tenacity, the result of thought coherently prosecuted, often attained by inferior men; and hence, even in his splendid descriptions and phantasies, a frequent excess of what he himself would have called mere *sugh*, and a frequent want of that closeness, finish, and intense keenness of effect, which, with the same imagery for

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the material, a severer artist could have aimed at. The truth is, those who knew Wilson unanimously feel that, as relics of such a magnificent human being as he was, all the writings that he has left behind him are less than adequate. What we have as Wilson's works in 1856, including even these glorious *Noctes*, is less than Scott and others who knew the Wilson of 1816 might have expected, and did expect, from such a soul lodged in such a physique. And so, after all, the moral is, that in literature as in war, one may often back the dark-skinned little Roman, drilled and disciplined, against the large succulent Goth, with eyes azure as the heavens and locks like golden sunbeams, whose first appearance terrifies him. With sinews of knotted steel, a step trained and firm, and one weapon at least of which he is master, the man naturally smaller may in the long-run accomplish the greater amount of consistent and effective work. Or, to drop the metaphor, there is many a man who "canna shute," who "canna fish," who "canna loup," who "canna warsle," who "canna soom," who "canna put the stane," who "canna fling the hammer," who "canna drive a gig," who "canna to ony effeck drink whisky," who yet may be a master of his craft, a perfect Kant in cogitation, a Pitt in politics, a Pope, or something better still, in poetry, and altogether a very tough customer if you happen to come across him. Only, the Shepherd is certainly right in recommending open-air exercise; and every one must admit, that if the Goth were disciplined, the Roman, unless he too were of the same huge stature, would have a poor chance.

Art. VIII.—THE PAST AND FUTURE OF CHRISTIANITY.

The History of Christianity, from the Birth of Christ to the Abolition of Paganism in the Roman Empire. By the Rev. H. H. Milman. 3 vols. London: Murray. 1840.

History of Latin Christianity; including that of the Popes to the Pontificate of Nicolas V. By Henry Hart Milman, D.D., Dean of St. Paul's. London: Murray. 3 vols. 1854; 3 vols. 1855.

Signs of the Times: Letters to Ernst Moritz Arndt on the Dangers to Religious Liberty in the Present State of the World. By Christian Charles Josias Bunsen, D.D., D.C.L., D.Ph. Translated from the German by Susanna Winkworth. London: Smith, Elder, and Co. 1856.

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Zur Geschichte der neuesten Theologie. Von Karl Schwarz. (Contributions to the History of the most recent Theology. By Charles Schwarz, Professor Extraordinary of Theology at Halle.) Leipsic: Brockhaus. 1856.

It seems a strange question to ask in the middle of the nineteenth century of the Christian era—"What is Christianity? what is its proper work? in what does its essential principle consist?" Yet the different and even contradictory answers which it has received, and is still receiving, are a sufficient proof that it has not hitherto been satisfactorily solved. No thoughtful, unprejudiced mind can deny, that such a question does continually present itself, and sometimes under a very perplexing aspect. When answers have been attempted, we find some too narrow, and others too broad; some shut up within the closest limits, others with scarce any limits at all; some obviously determined by the mental peculiarities of an individual or a sect, others so loose and vague as to leave us in the conclusion, that Christianity is every thing, and every thing is Christianity. A humorist once inscribed on the opening leaf of an album, "Whatever good thing shall be written in the ensuing pages of this book, I hereby claim as my own:" and so it has been remarked—not altogether without reason—of some Christian advocates, that they go through this world's history, with a title assumed *à priori* to appropriate whatever is pure and noble as Christian, and to reject whatever is evil as its opposite, without distinctly indicating the specific Christian element which can properly claim the one, and is not justly chargeable with the other.

Christianity is a vast subject, and we may look at it from three different points of view. We may contemplate it, first, in its seed and germ—in the documentary witnesses of its origin and earliest propagation preserved for us in the New Testament. We may, secondly, survey it as a great world-fact, traversing the history of ages, modifying, and at length transforming, the whole civilisation of the West. Or, lastly, we may separate, both from their scriptural source and from their historical development, its great spiritual principles—the love, the trust, the hope, the self-consecration to God, which constitute its living soul, and determine the most solemn and momentous relations of man's higher nature to the Infinite and the Everlasting—and treat them as a branch of human psychology, and endeavour to find their true place in the wide field of religious philosophy. Each of these views has had its own class of adherents, and been developed too much apart from the rest, with results as unsatisfactory and narrow as might naturally be expected from so one-sided an access to a subject which has many sides, and which, to be

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comprehended, must be surveyed on all. Scriptural critics and interpreters are prone to look for the whole of Christianity—the Christianity of all times and all countries—in the doctrines and applications, so largely determined by local and temporary influences, of the infant church and the first age, and thus to make a passing phase of Hebrew civilisation a type and model for the great European world of the present day. Christian historians, on the other hand, are apt to lose themselves in mere history, and to acquire such a fondness for whatever is antique, for old dogmas and old usages, long-silenced controversies, and the dim and shadowy forms of the great saints and heroes of the past, with whom they have grown familiar in their long wanderings through ancient paths, that Christianity becomes with them a kind of antiquarian dilettantism, and they forget the vital interests which it still represents in millions of human souls. The philosophic Christian, again, disjoins himself in another way from the world that now is and the world that has been; he is enamoured of ideas which bind him too exclusively, not simply to the present, but to his own feeling and conception of the present—insulating rather than sympathetic—sublime, but abstract—wanting the support of a true life in the concrete realities of history. Fully to understand Christianity, we must fathom it at its primal source; we must trace its course through the long windings of centuries; we must realise it in the present; we must incorporate it with the living organism of our own moral and spiritual being; and work it out into all the results, connections and applications of a healthy and reverential speculation.

In the mean while, a fearless and impartial exhibition of Christianity as a great historical fact, is indispensable to the clear recognition of that continuous thread of thought and sympathy which vitally connects the religion as a present conviction with the fresh outburst of the spirit at its origin, and to the development of those mental conditions which must enter into any adequate comprehension of Christianity as a whole: for the very diversity and contrast of the outward forms in which a common principle clothes itself, enable the mind more readily to distinguish it from them, and to apprehend it in its essence. In the breaking down of old theological systems, and the consequent weakening of many of the traditional conceptions of Christianity, there seems something almost providential, slowly preparing the way for some greater harmony of belief hereafter—in the remarkable impulse which has been given to the historical study of Christianity, and in the new lights which have been thus cast upon it from various quarters—in Germany, Holland, France, and more recently in England, within the last

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half-century. In this view we hail with much satisfaction the completion of Dean Milman's excellent work. It will occupy, we have little doubt, for a long time to come, a prominent place in our theological and historical literature. It does honour to the University in which such high scholarship was disciplined, and to the Church where views so large and liberal, and a spirit so genial and catholic, have been honourably acknowledged and met with their reward. Of the nine volumes (including those on the general history of Christianity to the fall of Paganism), the three just published, for interest, for clearness and vividness of narration, and for general historical ability, appear to us decidedly the best, though there is perhaps more of original research and a deeper vein of learning in the three first. The author's reading, indeed, is immense. He seems to have let no accessible source of information escape him. He has not only made himself acquainted with the primary authorities, but has diligently read up the most recent contributions of modern learning (and these in France and Germany have been exceedingly abundant) which have any bearing on the various points of his great theme. We might add, perhaps, that in one sense his reading has been too vast and multifarious. He is often oppressed by the weight of his materials. At times he merely indicates them in a note, without any adequate criticism of their value; at others, the endeavour to bring them within the prescribed limits of his narrative, encumbers and embarrasses his pen, and is evidently among the causes of the looseness and slovenliness of style, sometimes approaching, if it does not actually transgress, the verge of the strictly grammatical—which, though less painfully obvious than in the three former volumes of his *Latin Christianity*, still continues to disfigure many passages of a book the general tone of which is so scholar-like and refined. His work in this respect contrasts unfavourably with that of Gibbon, which is the model ever in his eye, and to which his own is plainly designed as a Christian counterpart and counteraction. That great writer is always completely master of his materials; he has them under his control, and moulds them at will; and, however diversified their source and character, fuses them down with matchless art, and yet with a rare fidelity which loses nothing essential, into a common substance with his own powerful and commanding thought, and the strongly-marked style which is its expressive index. Yet Milman has merits of his own, which must not be overlooked. He is more simple and natural than his stately and sonorous archetype. His heart is full of kindly human feeling; and he has an eye that catches with singular felicity, and under a softer and tenderer light than the cold philosophy of Gibbon was ever able to cast upon them,

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the picturesque aspects of the many strange and stirring scenes with which this great transition period of human history is so richly fraught. When his sensibilities are touched, and his fancy is awakened, and he can fling off for a moment the learned oppression of his task, the poetry latent in his nature breaks forth in such beautiful gleams, that it is impossible not to regret, that either more time or a narrower subject did not permit him to diffuse its brightness more uniformly over his pages, and to present the results of so much research and meditation in a more perfect and classical form. Milman is pre-eminently the poet, the scholar, and the man of taste; but the refined and delicate qualities of his mind are too often crushed and buried in the work before us underneath a load of dull and heavy erudition, which a mind more vigorous and muscular, perhaps coarser and less sensitive, might have borne without stumbling. The highest, undoubtedly the rarest, attribute of an historian we are unable to predicate of him. He does not seem to us largely endowed with the philosophic faculty. We miss in him that power of subtle and penetrating analysis, and that commanding grasp of innumerable particulars from a common point of view, which in the delineation of character or the discussion of a system, goes at once to the root of the associated phenomena, and detects the seminal principle that runs through them and binds them together in organic unity. This deficiency has struck us in his account of the Gnostic theories, and the Scholastic speculations of the middle ages, which offer so many points of interesting comparison, and though unquestionably, in their wild extravagance, a very morbid display of human intelligence, still run down into some of the deepest problems of our being, and yield collateral glimpses of great truths, not without benefit for more enlightened and scientific times. We must not forget, that it was Leibnitz who said, in speaking of the medieval Scholasticism, "*Il y a de l'or dans ce fumier.*" Both these subjects Dr. Milman has treated rather slightly and superficially, as compared with the importance which attaches to them, from the immense effect both of the Gnostic and of the Scholastic movement on the subsequent development of Christian doctrine, and even on the general course of human thought.

The subject of the six volumes of *Latin Christianity* is not rightly conceived or duly presented from our point of view. Too much prominence is given to the epithet "Latin." Latinism and Teutonism (if we may be allowed such terms, to express the two constituent elements of medieval civilisation) are too broadly distinguished by the author. What he calls Latin Christianity was powerfully modified in its whole character and working by the reaction upon it at every point of the Teutonic influences

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with which it was brought into contact. Even the Church of the Middle Ages was not purely and exclusively Latin, unless we rest our justification of the term on the use of the language in which its public services were performed. This is evident from the character of the poetry, the philosophy, the art, and even the superstitions, which grew up from its root and were sheltered under its shade, and are among the most distinctive products of the time. The old beliefs of the North,—witches, dwarfs, and elves,—which all the zeal of Christian missionaries had been unable to expel, still kept their place, as Grimm has clearly shown in his *Deutsche Mythologie*, in the popular mind of Western Europe, and mingling grotesquely with the relics of classical fable, formed a dark expressive background to the strange wild picture occupied in front with the figures of the Virgin and of innumerable saints, and threw over the whole of it an obscure but a marked Teutonic tone. Again, how unlike are the speculations of Aquinas, Bonaventura, and Scotus—their depth and inwardness of spiritual feeling—to any thing we meet with in the Greek or Roman schools! They are obviously impregnated with a subtle element of thought, which cannot be traced back to any classical or even any oriental source. What parallel can we find in the old heathen poetry, or in the fading classicism of the Christian Prudentius, to the subjective depth and earnestness and the profound spiritual pathos of Dante and of the nobler hymns of the Church! We cannot but recognise in this altered tone the tacit influences of another and a fresher race combining with all that yet survived of the noble and heroic from ancient Rome. The pointed style of architecture, acknowledged on all hands as a legitimate offspring of the Church,—in the feeling which pervades it, in the forms which it has assumed, and in the impression which it leaves on the mind,—is wholly dissimilar from any effect which could be ascribed to proper Latinism, as conveying and perpetuating the old Roman spirit. But it is a more serious defect in Dean Milman's book, that, after following the history of Christianity under his guidance through fourteen centuries, we gather from it no clear idea what Christianity distinctively and essentially is. It exhibits to us a series of social transformations, without revealing to us the inner principle which is at the heart of them, and which preserves its identity through them all. It is a history rather of Christian civilisation than of Christianity itself. In his concluding pages, the author speaks eloquently and feelingly of the future prospects of Christianity, of the changes which its doctrines and forms will probably undergo, and of the purer and more powerful influence which its universal principles are destined to exert on the progressive career of the human race: but we are still left with-

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out any clear intimation, what these universal principles are, as distinct from mere natural religion; what is the specifically Christian element in them, transmitted by the Church and preserved in the New Testament from generation to generation. We can form no definite conception of the possibilities of the coming age, because we do not see distinctly what is to be committed to it; and thus one great benefit of the study of the Past, which is to draw out of it some clear principle for the illumination and guidance of the Future, is almost wholly lost.

Christianity is not only not a local religion, but—(and this is a very remarkable feature in its history)—with every change of locality, with each successive migration into another language and a new form of social existence, it seems to have acquired wider powers and a deeper influence, and to become instinct with a higher vitality. It may be instructive to notice briefly some of the steps of this progress; as they are strongly marked off from each other, and the subject has not met with the attention that it deserves. The lowest and most contracted phase of Christianity is unquestionably the Hebraic, as it is exhibited to us in the six first chapters of the Acts of the Apostles. Had it remained in this phase, most inadequately representing the spirit of its Author,—though perhaps an inevitable condition of its regular development,—it could never have risen beyond the character and aim of a Jewish reformation, subsiding possibly at last within the limits of another Jewish sect. It accepted the traditional conception of a kingdom of God, as it had been shaped by rabbinical interpretations out of the Law and the Prophets, and looked for its speedy realisation by the risen and returning Jesus, in a form of which the popular Chiliasm furnished a familiar type, and of which we still possess a vivid reflection in the Apocalypse ascribed to John. It was narrow and limited in its views,—on one side dark and heavy with Pharisaic exclusiveness, on the other evaporating into the mystic asceticism of the Essenes. It clung to the Law, and persecuted those who saw something broader and nobler beyond it. Its aspiration was, the subjection of humanity to Judaism, not the absorption of Judaism in humanity.—From this enthralment the Gospel was emancipated by Hellenism, which was itself a modification of Judaism on that outer verge of the national life where Judaism was brought into habitual contact with heathenism. Stephen and Paul were both Hellenists. It was through the Hellenists, that Christianity became Hellenic or properly Greek. In the diffusion of a Greek civilisation over Lower Asia, Syria, and Egypt, we witness one of those grand historical combinations which brought an obscure religious movement among the peasantry of Galilee into vital action on the moral

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condition of the whole civilised world, and must impress every mind which contemplates the event in its full significance, with an irresistible belief in Providence. When Christianity was carried by Paul into the atmosphere of Greek thought, it began at once to breathe more freely, and it imbibed new elements of life and activity. It was as a Greek religion that it came into the West. The Hebraisms which enter so largely into its teachings and promises, were themselves sensibly modified by the Greek form into which they had been transfused in the Alexandrine version of the Old Testament, and under which they have been brought to us in the earliest extant documents of Christianity now comprised in the New. In its whole course of instruction written and oral, Christianity, for at least two centuries, was essentially Greek. In Italy itself the creed was recited at baptism in Greek. In North-west Africa, the most Latin of all the provinces, Tertullian wrote two of his earliest treatises in Greek. It was in Greek, that Irenæus introduced Christianity into Gaul. On its great facts and fundamental doctrines the hungry spirit of Greek speculation, craving after fresh food, and already whetted by oriental stimulants, eagerly fastened. Greek philosophers embraced the new faith; and Neoplatonism found in it many kindred tendencies. While they undoubtedly corrupted its primitive simplicity, they took from it much of its Jewish narrowness, and presented it in a form better adapted to conciliate and convince the heathen mind. But as the religion expanded upward into the world of speculative thought, it withered at its root, and lost its hold on that soil of reality and popular conviction in which it originally grew. The Gnostic systems are a proof of this. Had they prevailed, Christianity would have been dissolved into an airy idea. It was the first great peril to which the religion of humanity was exposed. It was the conflict, if we may so express it, between the abstract and the concrete,—between Greek idealism and Hebrew practicality. Neither triumphed exclusively; but they modified each other, and coalesced into a compound which widely permeated the whole realm of Christian thought. The Montanist movement, with its doctrine of passive inspiration and its Chiliastic reveries, which succeeded Gnosticism in the latter part of the second century, may be regarded as the extreme form of anti-gnostic reaction. It is unfortunate, that our knowledge of the greater Gnostic theories—the Basilidian and Valentinian—should be so imperfect, and derived from such prejudiced sources; for the effect produced by the introduction of a life and doctrine like those of Christ, into an atmosphere strongly charged with speculative elements, the excitement which it every where spread, the sort of mental conflagration

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which it instantaneously kindled, is one of the most extraordinary phenomena in the history of opinion; nor can its influence on the subsequent development of Christianity, partly by its own direct action, and still more through the vehement reaction which it provoked against its extravagance, be too highly estimated. When these wild speculations subsided, Greek philosophy still continued to exercise an influence, though of a calmer and healthier kind, on the growth of Christian doctrine and the expansion of Christian ideas, in the learned schools of Clemens and Origen at Alexandria, and the more dogmatic mysticism of Athanasius which succeeded them; in the christianised Platonism of those accomplished men, the Gregories and Basil, who took up into their faith all that pagan scholarship could yet furnish of what was refined and beautiful; and in the more vigorous and logical studies of the Syriac fathers, Diodorus and Theodore, of whose sound philology and calm rationalism we see enough in the remains that have been preserved to us, to make us regret that we do not know more of what they thought and wrote. Through the whole of this period, the influences of Greek philosophy were silently infiltrating themselves into the body of Christian doctrine, and imbuing it with a quality which it could not otherwise have possessed, especially in all its aspects towards Deity and the relations of Deity with our human world; and although in the exhaustless fertility of the Greek language it has introduced some forms of expression, and ventured on a hard, presumptuous realism, from which a humbler and soberer philosophy would instinctively have shrunk, yet in its day it may have rendered good service to the human mind, and helped to dissipate the cold, vague indifference of the later paganism, by accustoming men to look at the invisible world, and the Intelligence which fills it, as a positive, objective *fact*, from whose influence they could not withdraw themselves, and in whose favourable bearing on their own condition they had a solemn and momentous interest.

The third migration of Christianity was into the Latin language, and the proper civilisation of the West. This change was a result of the conversion of the Gauls, including Britain, of Spain, and of North-west Africa; but Christianity was not perhaps completely saturated with the Latin element till the fourth century. This period, extending from the third century to the commencement of the sixth and the pontificate of Gregory the Great, we may contradistinguish from the Greek, which preceded it in the West, as the Roman. The Vulgate—itself probably the last result of several preliminary efforts to render the Scriptures from Greek into Latin—was the product of this period, and obtained an authority which first equalled, and

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afterwards superseded, throughout the West, that of the original Greek. The last writers who handled the Latin language with vigour and freedom, before it exhibited signs of organic corruption, were the Christian fathers of this period—Tertullian, Cyprian, Ambrose, Arnobius, Lactantius, Jerome, above all Augustine. They familiarised the West to some extent with the higher speculative questions of Greek theology, and developed the latent capabilities of the Latin tongue, as Cicero had formerly enriched its philosophical terminology, by making it the vehicle of ideas to which only the richness and flexibility of the Greek might have previously seemed adequate. On all these transcendental questions—on the proper *theology* of Christianity, as distinct from its *anthropology*—the Latin fathers, for the most part, took their materials from the East, and were content with enforcing by all the aids of native rhetoric, conclusions already decided, on the more submissive West. On one occasion only, before the virtual separation of the Greek and Latin Churches, did the West react with any thing like original productiveness and authoritative force on the deliberations of the East,—in the celebrated letter of Pope Leo I. to the patriarch Flavian, which fixed the limits of the subtle question of the two natures at the Council of Chalcedon. Nevertheless, though in this comparatively passive state, the language of the West, under the constant action of Greek thought enriched by Oriental elements, acquired a range and variety of expression, a closeness of adaptation to the inward states and changes of the soul, a depth, a pathos, and even a passionateness of tone, which sensibly distinguishes the ecclesiastical Latinity from the cold and polished objectiveness of the great classical models. The learning of the Western fathers was almost wholly confined to Latin. This was the case with Augustine himself. Jerome was one of the very few who knew any thing of Greek or Hebrew. Perhaps it was even an advantage, and might contribute to the originality and independence of Western thought, that when the Latin had undergone all the widening and enrichment of which it was capable under Greek influence, it should be thrown on its own resources, and left to furnish out of itself a sufficiency of expression for the questions that were specially committed to it, as having sprung up within the limits of its own domain. Unparalleled revolutions and the genius of a great man have impressed on the theology of the West a character peculiarly its own. Exposed to the incursions of barbarian tribes, surrounded by the crash of falling institutions, and witnessing the utter helplessness of the enfeebled and exhausted humanity which lay prostrate beneath them, the earnest and sensitive spirit of Augustine, conscious of personal frailty, and disciplined by sad and

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various experience, looked to the Sovereign Almightiness, accessible to faith and prayer alone, as the sole conceivable deliverance from perdition—as the one only power capable of building up out of this world of ruins, that kingdom of God which still floated in glorious but dim outline before his Christian vision. Man's sinfulness and God's grace were the two antitheses of existence, on which his intense thoughtfulness concentred itself: and though the logical subtlety and consequentiality of his mind, grasping themes too vast for the solution of a finite intelligence, involved him in conclusions from which reason and humanity equally recoil, yet the sway which his system has exercised for centuries over the most powerful and fervid minds, the disinterestedness with which it has inspired them, and the heroism of which it has made them capable, prove to a certainty that it must contain, in the midst of its appalling paradoxes, some element of imperishable truth, and must make its appeal to some deep and inextinguishable consciousness of the human soul; nor can it admit of reasonable question, that Augustine's vivid apprehension of the close personal relation between the individual soul and the living God, pervading as it has done so deeply the theology of more than a thousand years, is one great source of that depth and inwardness of feeling, that profound *subjectiveness*, that contemplation of every thing outward and material in the inner light of the soul, which distinguishes, as belonging to a new world, in art, in literature, and in philosophy, the most characteristic products of medieval and modern thought.

A new era commences with Gregory the Great, at the opening of the seventh century. In general terms, we may define the Middle Ages as extending from that date to the first half of the fifteenth century; though this vast period must be again divided into two minor periods, of which the first, from the seventh to the end of the tenth century, may be described as one of decomposition; the second, as one of reconstruction. Every thing in Gregory's rule and character and mental culture announced that the Roman age was gone—that the old classical civilisation had for ever passed away. Christianity was now to pass through a greater change than it had yet experienced, and to take up into its inner life richer moral elements than the old world could supply; but for this purpose it must descend into the womb of deepest, darkest chaos. The speech, indeed, of the departed civilisation still subsisted in the services of the Church, in the teachings of Scripture, in the discussions of synods, and in the controversies of the clergy; but it rapidly became a dead and sacred tongue—the attribute and distinction of a priestly order, enveloping their rites in deeper mystery, and marking off by a sharper line of separation the two great classes of clergy

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and laity into which society had divided itself. The language of common life was inevitably corrupted and disorganised. People of a strange speech mingled with the native provincials; and the corruption was accelerated by the decay and dissolution of the old grammatical schools. The proper inflexions were forgotten and dropped, and their place rudely supplied by prepositions and auxiliaries. Where no standard of correctness was maintained by an established system of education, the vocal peculiarities of the tribe which overran a district, reacted on the provincial Latin, and laid the foundation for permanent dialectic varieties by some prevailing modification of vowel-sounds or the substitution of cognate consonants. Gregory, in whose very barbarism there was a certain greatness, was perfectly aware of the disintegrating process that was breaking up the language of his fathers; but amidst the graver moral evils of the time he viewed it with indifference and contempt. He even rebuked some of his clergy for attending to such pagan vanities as the rules of Priscian and Donatus. Instead of fighting against his age, he went with it, and strove, as best he could, to guide it. Thus, while the Church continued Latin, the Christianity outside the Church,—the Christianity which, rude as it was, got into the hearts and spoke in the voice of the people,—was acquiring an utterance of its own, more natural and more free, though as yet dimly shaping forth the inner feelings and convictions of the soul. The clergy were often drawn from the servile class, and must frequently, therefore, have been of various races. This circumstance alone could not be without powerful effect on the popular Christianity, as infusing into it new elements—especially when it was found expedient to preach to the people occasionally in their native dialects. On the other hand, the intermixture of different tribes in one district, and the want of a common medium of intelligence between the educated and the inferior classes, must have been for a time among the most powerful causes of the extreme barbarism of the age; and when this confusion was at its height, the mental darkness of society must have been thickest. Nevertheless, it is quite conceivable, that the fusion of the different moral elements which were now in active fermentation all over Europe, might take place more intimately and thoroughly in this state of things than would have been possible had the action of the clergy on the popular mind been exerted through a medium which conveyed clearer ideas and produced a more definite impression. If more had been imparted from without, more might have been checked and stifled within. For a long time the clerical influence was limited to submission and vague awe; it did not penetrate deep, or mould with much force the inner working of the soul. Had

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it been otherwise, the old might have overpowered the new; and, instead of blending with it, the Latin might have absorbed the Teutonic element. Possibly this transient darkness was a condition of the richer and fuller light which ultimately broke out of it. It is difficult to frame any clear idea of the state of society in this first period of the Middle Ages. We think of it as a time of general disruption, dissolution, mingling and fusion, with a Christian element faintly permeating and re-combining this vast chaos: and so in truth it was. But it must not be forgotten, that underneath this flood and devastation of barbarism there lay, almost untouched, the material framework of the most compact and commanding civilisation which the world has yet seen—the bridges, the aqueducts, the military roads (the very counterpart of our modern railways), the vast defensive walls, the impregnable castles, and the walled and castellated towns, with which the great engineering resources of the Romans had connected, strengthened and fortified every point of their immense empire. The foundations of civilisation had not been destroyed; they still endured ready-made to the hand of the barbarian; it was only the society which had been settled on them, with its beliefs, its culture and its traditions, that was swept away; and so, by a combination of circumstances unparalleled in previous history, the elements of civilisation and barbarism subsisted side by side, inlaid, as it were, into each other in grotesque mosaic work all over Western Europe. All this worked powerfully on the rough but vigorous intelligence and the sagacious instincts of the immigrant tribes, and helped them to re-organise the system which their first hostile shock had so fearfully shaken. The idea of Rome, the central power of the world, embracing all nations under one sovereign sway, though overcast for a time, was never extinguished, and soon revived, bringing with it the new conception, infused by Christianity, of a kingdom of God, of which a Roman empire was to be the material defence and the outward manifestation. This alliance of two interests, intimately connected but still distinct, the spiritual and the secular, involved a conflict of aims and pretensions which for centuries actuated the politics of Europe, and issued finally, though after a fearful expenditure of suffering and blood, in a clearer perception than might else have been attainable, of the separation between the things of Cæsar and the things of God. Charlemagne, the greatest man of this first period of the Middle Ages, though hardly its representative (for he was beyond it), attempted in vain to re-establish an empire of the West, by recalling, with the aid of the clergy, the Latin civilisation which was irrevocably gone. It was a premature attempt at organisation. During his own lifetime his powerful

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arm artificially sustained it; but it gave way under his successors. The instrumentality was too weak, the resisting materials opposed to it too strong. Organic reconstruction demanded first a more entire dissolution of elements from previous combinations. Decomposition went on more rapidly than ever, and chaos thickened during the ninth and tenth centuries. New inroads, north and south and east, intestine warfare, plague, famine, insurrection, superstitious panic, shook asunder all the bonds of society, and reduced Europe to a state very nearly of complete disintegration; and it was not till this violent agitation of the waters had ceased, that the elements held in it subsided and began slowly to crystallise.

From the eleventh century onwards (and with this we may date the commencement of the second period of the Middle Ages), we observe the work of reconstruction in progressive operation. The last immigration had now mingled its young and vigorous blood with the population of the West and South, in the descent of the Northmen; and the influx from Scandinavia henceforth ceased. New tribes of Teutonic and Sclavonian race had been added to the fold of Christ. The Saxons had learned submission to the ecclesiastical yoke so cruelly imposed on them by Charlemagne. Anschar's devoted zeal had spread the faith into the forests of Denmark, and the still wilder regions which lay beyond them. Prussia, Lithuania, Poland, Bohemia, and Moravia (after some temporary conflict respecting the two last between the claims of the Greek and the Latin Church), acknowledged the authority of missionaries teaching in the name and with the sanction of Rome. The incursions of the Huns and Avars on the East, and the progress of the Saracens in the South and West, seemed to have reached their limits; and a broad though somewhat fluctuating line of separation marked off definitely the realms of heathendom and Christendom. In this state of things, two causes contributed powerfully to develop a feeling of social unity, and to centralise thought and effort throughout Western Europe: the ambition of the popes, in part successful, to assert a universal sovereignty; and the enterprise of the Crusades. Both these causes had their root in a belief, inherited from the earliest times of the Church, and through every period of its history exerting a deep and solemn influence: we refer to the expectation, which from age to age haunted the consciousness of Christendom, though its fulfilment was constantly deferred,—that the end of all things was at hand, and that Christ would shortly reappear from heaven, to hold the grand assize of the universe and to judge the living and the dead. Many circumstances gave a peculiar intensity to this belief at the end of the tenth and during the course of the

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eleventh century: the terrible calamities which had swept over Europe, and the dissolution of all social ties, reducing it to the utmost weakness and misery, during the century and a half which had elapsed since Charlemagne, who seemed to have raised his strong arm in vain to avert impending ruin; the threatening of fierce implacable infidels at all points of the ever-contracting sphere of Christendom; and the thought, which gave all other considerations a deeper significance, that the great millennial day which had witnessed the birth of the Lord, was now drawing to its close.* Christ's own words were remembered, how he had foretold that "great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world," should precede the revelation of the kingdom of God; and men saw the signs of its approach in the state of the world around them.† This solemn event must not come on them without due preparation to meet it: and what preparation could be made, according to the ideas of that age, but forsaking their internal strife and jealousy, and banding themselves together as one Christian brotherhood; submitting all temporal rule to the supreme authority of their spiritual head, Christ's representative and vicegerent among men; and rescuing, by a united effort, from its ignominious captivity in the hands of unbelievers, that holy soil once trodden by his mortal footsteps, where, it was the universal belief, the Lord would again descend from heaven upon earth? The armed peace and graduated dependency of the feudal system afforded new facilities for realising the first of these conditions. Some popes of vast energy and capacity—more especially Gregory VII. and Innocent III., whose characters combined in puzzling harmony sincere and disinterested zeal with profound craft and insatiable ambition—succeeded to a large extent in accomplishing the second. The proposal of the third, when first made, seized all ranks and both sexes, and even children, with a fever of enthusiasm from one end of Europe to the other, and precipitated the wild popular strength of Christendom, forced into a single channel and urged by a common impulse, in one vast flood of fanaticism on the East.‡ This fervour did not en-

* "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." 2 *Peter* iii. 8.

† How deep and universal was this persuasion, may be gathered from the fact, that the preambles of many deeds and chartularies of this date yet extant begin with the words, *appropinquante jam fine mundi.*

‡ "You might see the husband," says William of Malmsbury, who was a contemporary (p. 416, Sharpe's Transl.), "departing with his wife, indeed, with all his family; you would smile to see the whole household laden on a carriage, about to proceed on their journey. The road was too narrow for the passengers." "The rustic," observes Guibert of Nogent, another writer of that age, "shod his oxen like horses, and placed his whole family on a cart; where it was amusing to hear the children, on the approach to any large town or castle, inquiring if that were Jerusalem."

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dure. It is curious to observe, how each successive crusade was undertaken with less zeal than the preceding, till at last it was found impossible to raise any general enthusiasm in the cause at all; though individual warriors and princes were sometimes moved in a moment of compunctious sorrow or pious zeal to assume the cross, and the popes had every motive to encourage an undertaking which confirmed their authority and filled their coffers. The popes too declined in influence as they became themselves less superstitious and more worldly. We perceive the change, on comparing Gregory VII. or even Innocent III. with Boniface VIII. The schism in the papacy, one pope at Avignon and another at Rome, dissolved the spell which, despite some occasional bursts of royal refractoriness, had once held the mind of Europe in submissive thraldom; and the discussions at Constance and Basle rendered it impossible that the spiritual autocracy of former centuries should ever be restored. The influence of papal centralisation and of the crusades on the condition of society was no doubt immense; but far more indirectly and by reaction than in any positive and immediate effect. Disappointment of fervid hopes and wider experience compelled men to reflect, purged out a wild and unreasoning enthusiasm from the better order of minds, and rallied such learning as the age could supply, around the papal chair, to assert and defend the interests of which it was the symbol. The great scholastic doctors, till the time of Occam who was Ghibelline, were devotedly papal; and their learning, though scanty in its materials and limited in its object, was digested and exposed with a marvellous logic which disciplined the mind for encountering more important questions in future years. Thoughtful men, moreover, could not fail to reflect on the singular position of Christendom,—surrounded on three sides by an infidel nation more refined and cultivated, and more advanced in the arts of life, than themselves, to whose schools their own youth and all who were in quest of knowledge, repaired for instruction, and whose faith, blasphemous as they had been taught to regard it, they had learned from experience was capable of cherishing noble and chivalrous virtues. Comparisons glanced at times through their minds, which were not always favourable to their own Church and people. Abelard, harassed and wearied with persecution, looked to the land of the infidel, in the hope of a peace which he found not at home; and our own King John, and his French neighbour Philip Augustus, both declared, in the height of their quarrel with Innocent III., that they would take refuge from priestly insolence among the enemies of Christ. Frederic II., a large-hearted and enlightened sovereign, encouraged and patronised the learned and ingenious among the Jews and Mussul-

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mans, and freely made use of their science in his universities of Naples and Salerno.

Meanwhile, the conflict which the daring claims of the popes had provoked with the civil power, opened men's eyes more and more to the wide difference of the grounds on which secular and spiritual authority should be based, and helped to develop the principles by which the juster constitution of modern societies was hereafter to be regulated. Open and avowed revolt broke out in innumerable sects of various names and mysterious origin, who all agreed in their abhorrence of the wealth and worldliness and vice of the monks and clergy, and in their reverence for the purity and simplicity of the primitive gospel; and they infused a deep leaven of reform into the heart of society, which continued to work silently and powerfully, in spite of the bloody extirpation of the Albigenses, and the more politic measure of meeting the sectaries on their own ground by the counter-agency of mendicant preachers. The popular mind, aroused and enlightened by the mad and shameless insolence of its spiritual oppressors, with its honest instincts all awake to the sense of truth and right, had found a voice in the vernacular dialects, now fully developed and in the fresh vigour of their youthful prime, which, from the North of England to the South of Italy, from the Rhine and the Elbe to the Loire and the Garonne, in the romance, the fabliau, and the apologue,—the lively tale of Chaucer, and the light song of the Troubadour,—in the solemn visions of Dante, the homely earnestness of Langland, and the stern warnings and denunciations of Wycliffe,—scattered freely to the winds of heaven accents of reproach, contempt, and indignation, which nourished far and wide the purpose and the power of future reform. With the new languages of Europe, Christianity acquired an organ which expressed, as never before, the most varied notes and the deepest tones of her inmost soul. Yet the Church was still strong in the midst of all her enemies. The mass of the learning and intelligence of the age was on her side. There were many who, like Hampden at a later day, loved the Church, though they hated churchmen. She had wealth at her command for all her purposes; and she often spent it munificently on the outward glory of her ritual and her temples and her retreats of piety. Literature and the arts she took under her special protection in the pontificate of Nicolas V.; and could she have checked the venality and repressed the licentiousness which had so deeply infected her inner life—could she have used the learning and the elegance which revived in Europe in the fifteenth century, honourably and faithfully, as handmaids in the service of religion, and lightened the pressure of her yoke on the minds of thoughtful and cultivated men—the reopening of the mines of

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classical literature might have prolonged her existence instead of hastening her fall. For there was little sympathy—though they accidentally worked together towards a common result—between the spirit of philosophical freedom and independence which was fostered by an ardent study of the remains of pagan antiquity and impatiently resisted the restraints of ecclesiastical authority, and that deep religious earnestness, nursed by scriptural reading and an Augustinian theology, which desired ecclesiastical reform in the same degree that it regarded the Church as the most important institution in society. Both parties rejoiced in the Reformation, but for a different reason: one, that it released them from the authority of the priest; the other, that it subjected them to the authority of the Bible; the former valued it for what it destroyed, the latter for what it gave; the principle of the one was negative, that of the other positive. And both parties have their representatives at the present day. The former are the lineal ancestors of the modern deists and cultivators of natural religion, whose guiding principle rests more on reason than on faith, and of those rationalising Christians who hang undecided between reason and scripture, and know not how to apportion the degree of allegiance due to each; the latter find their successors in the class of thorough-going, evangelical Protestants, zealously attached to a definite, positive belief, every article of which they believe they can establish on the clear authority of the Word of God. Besides these, there has remained, even among Protestants, a party, and not a small one, which has this in common with Catholics, that it clings to Church-authority. These three parties rest on different principles, each of which contains some element of essential truth—reason, scripture, tradition; though the relation between them seems nowhere clearly defined, and the mode of harmonising and combining them is one of the problems which the future has yet to solve.

We have traversed a wide space; and we feel how wide it is, when we compare the court of Leo X., at which we may suppose ourselves now arrived,—polished, voluptuous, and heathenish,—with that upper chamber at Jerusalem, where a few Galilean rustics and their friends are assembled for prayer on the day of Pentecost. To speak the plain truth, when we take our stand in the period of the Reformation, and look back on a millennium and a half, there is not a little, at a first view, to perplex and confound us in the retrospect. Our immediate impression is, that the most beneficent of all human undertakings has been a complete failure; that the promise which heralded its introduction into the world has not been fulfilled; that Providence has not accomplished the work which we had been accustomed to regard as peculiarly its own. The contrast between

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the Christian ideal of the Gospel of John and the reality of the Church,—between the Christianity of Christ and the Christianity of history,—is painful in the extreme: it stands out with a harsh and cutting sharpness, which wounds and lacerates our spiritual vision. Christ's spirit is all diffusiveness; he excludes none from his converse; he consorts with publicans and sinners; he has no austerity and pride; he sits down at all tables; he goes any where and every where, to seek and to save that which is lost. But what, almost from the day of its formation, has been the conduct of the Church? Intolerance and exclusiveness have characterised it. It has shut itself up within arbitrary privileges; and founded a merit on gratuitous distinctions; and driven away from its communion the very parties whom, if it deemed them in error, it should rather have welcomed to its bosom, that it might redeem them. Christ's life is a model of simplicity and purity: the Church has been filled with the spirit of lust and avarice. Christ dealt with the spirits of men, and only through the spirit acted on their temporal condition, and kept his kingdom separate from that of this world: the Church has been bound up with the wealth and the honours, and soiled with all the passions and the crimes, of the state. Christ's spirit was love, and breathed of human brotherhood: the path of the Church through the ages has been scorched with fire and stained with blood; it has carried discord with it wherever it has gone; and we can trace it by the voice of hatred and cursing. Christ's religion was calm and wise,—full of practical goodness, genial and joyous: the religion of the Church has been gloomy and ascetic, filled with miserable superstitions, selfish anxieties, and degrading terrors. Christ's Church is served by a ministry of love; the Church of history by a priesthood of fear. Christ's loving influence quickens into new life and higher action every faculty and affection of the human frame: the Church, in all ages, has striven to check individuality of thought, and stereotyped all ideas in her own mould, and shown herself hostile to freedom and progress.

We have stated these contrasts strongly, that the whole reality might come before us, and the objections, as they occur to the reader, when his eye ranges over the past, might stand out in all their force: but we have only stated what, as a general truth, is borne out by the facts of history. And now, what are we to say to these things? Must the book of the Church be closed as a painful enigma, only furnishing doubt and distrust of Providence? Or is there another view of the subject, which will exhibit these dark passages on a background of broader light, and enable us to draw from them consolation for the Past and hope for the Future?

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At the outset, it is obvious to remark, that the amazing dissimilitude and disproportion which we have noticed between the original idea of Christianity, as expressed by Christ, and its subsequent realisation in history, has two sides; and that if, on the one hand, it seems at first sight to indicate a weakness and insufficiency in the instrumentalities of Providence for sustaining and executing the great charge intrusted to them, it proves, on the other, how infinitely Christ himself, in his doctrine and his life, transcended the conception and present capacity of the world into which he was sent; and how impossible it is to explain such a character, if we regard it as an historical reality—(and the difficulty is not diminished, but increased, by supposing it, with Strauss, to be a mythic development of a few historical elements)—as the product of a general fermentation of ideas in the age when it appeared. There are phenomena in human history which we can only solve on the assumption of something perfectly original and unique in the constitution of the minds which exhibit them—of some deeper action and richer influx, not traceable by us to any general and overt law,—of that primal Character from which all the forms of mind ultimately proceed. What is called genius seems to us included in this category of phenomena: nor are we conscious of the slightest want of reverence,—on the contrary, feel ourselves penetrated with the profoundest reverence for the greatest of all God's mysteries,—when we say, that in the department of RELIGIOUSNESS—that obscure and awful verge of being where man's spirit seems to come into immediate contact with the Divine—we place Christ at the summit of conceivable genius, occupying a position sole, supreme, and as yet unapproached. He stands, indeed, so high, that the purest and noblest elements of our humanity must experience an immense development, and all its coarser adhesions be well purged out, before it can enter generally into any vital communion with him. Yet we all feel, in our better moments, how stimulating it is to have such an ideal constantly before us. From this point of view, we can see that there was truth in Soame Jenyns's celebrated argument, that the discordancy of the Gospel with the predominant interests, passions, and pursuits of mankind, is a proof of its celestial origin.

But Christianity once communicated to the world through the life and death of its Founder, had to make its way under the ordinary conditions of social progress. If it was to leaven the world, and become the principle of a new civilisation, it must enter into an external combination at least with many things that were opposed to its spirit and inconsistent with its purity. Its earliest fortunes, it should be remembered, were involved with those of a rotten and perishing civilisation; and

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it could not escape the consequences of social corruption and dissolution. This consideration should have weight, when we complain of the mischiefs—and they were doubtless manifold—of its incorporation with the state. Only two alternatives, as far as we can see, were open to the religion: it might have remained free and independent—a purely spiritual influence—cherished by the individual conscience, and spread by the efforts of voluntary zeal;—in which case it would have been in danger of being absorbed in some of the wild theories that filled the world on the overthrow of the old paganism: or, if it sought protection against secret undermining and open violence in strong corporate forms, a ruling priesthood, and a rigid orthodoxy, recognised, defended, and endowed by the civil power, it must then incur all the evils of such close association with temporal interests, and share in the guilt of the tyranny and wickedness of which their history is so largely made up. Our sympathies are, of course, with the primitive missionaries, who scattered the seeds of Christian truth in entire independence of the hierarchy, and who were at length displaced and superseded by the Romanist agency of Augustine in Britain, and Boniface in Germany: but it is a question, open at least to entertainment, whether their continuance in their actual state would have so directly contributed to the future civilisation of Europe as the triumph of their adversaries. We see the evil that was; what might have been, we can only conjecture. It is a problem of history, not a question of morals.

From the very fact that religion penetrates so deeply into our being, and mingles so intimately with the intensest of our hopes and fears, we constantly find its presence in scenes and its influence in actions which seem inconsistent with its nature. It is in the centre of our humanity, and struggles and suffers along with it; and whatever it affects, partakes of its own mysterious strength, and has a touch of its infinity. We may say of religion, what Coleridge has so beautifully said of love:

> "All thoughts, all passions, all desires,
> Whatever stirs this mortal frame,—
> All are Religion's ministers,
> And feed her sacred flame."

Strange as it may seem, it is this all-pervading depth and universality of the religious sentiment which gives it a sort of exclusiveness in the minds which it possesses with its utmost force. If it is embraced as a truth at all, it is felt to be *the* truth, one and sovereign, with which no other can come into competition—the sole light, strength, and consecration of our being: and men not readily distinguishing, especially in the season of fresh and fervent zeal, their own apprehension of the

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truth from its spiritual substance, what is health to themselves from what is health for others, and having at the same time a dim but deep-rooted feeling that all truth must be one, are very soon and very honestly betrayed into the persuasion, that intolerance to their fellow-men is allegiance to God. This is one of the last errors which the good unlearn. It is Böttiger, we think, who remarks, that all monotheistic religions are essentially intolerant; and in one sense it must be so. Polytheism has no difficulty in admitting new gods; monotheism can allow no partnership or proximity with Him who is absolutely One and Supreme. The Neoplatonic philosophers of the second and third centuries found no fault with the doctrines of the Christians, or their reverence for the nature of Jesus: what they objected to was, the exclusiveness of this new sect, which refused to take its place among other religions and to set its founder's bust beside those of Orpheus and Apollonius. But, however attended with collateral mischiefs, which we of the present day can clearly see, and are therefore bound to avoid, there was an instinct of self-preservation in this exclusiveness of the ancient Christians, without which their religion might have lost its identity, dissolved and dissipated in the vague syncretism of beliefs through which heathenism slowly passed into Christianity. This consideration offers some explanation of that fearful fact of persecution, which lies as a charge against every form and profession of Christian belief, from the Catholics on the one hand to the Socinians on the other, and in which the best and the worst of men are equally involved,—repugnant as it seems to all our ideas of a religion of holiness and love. Men must be tried by their fidelity to what they believe at the time to be just and right. Conscience expands with the growth of the intellect. In all ages blasphemy has been looked on with horror, as the greatest of human crimes. There is something in our nature which suggests it as the height of wickedness, to insult the majesty and contradict the truth of God. The sin against the Holy Ghost occurs to us as something impossible to be forgiven. Men, urged by their instincts in the weakness of reason, take their own false and narrow measure of what blasphemy is; and become unconsciously, believing themselves all the while only servants of the truth, guilty of the highest injustice to their fellow-men. So close are the boundaries of good and evil in human nature, so easily do they slide into each other, and so strange are the mixtures thus produced, that proud, vengeful, and selfish passions imperceptibly infuse themselves into feelings which commenced in honest earnestness, and are cherished to their last expression of harshness and cruelty with no clear sense of criminality. Jerome's words, "*Non est crudelitas pro*

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Deo pietas," express the sentiment which has justified persecution to many earnest and upright minds. They viewed the burning of a heretic as we regard the execution of a criminal: they felt it to be a necessity on which they were unwillingly forced; and religious persecution, to do it justice, has almost always made great efforts to avert the final stroke by obtaining the recantation of its victims. Augustine employed argument and persuasion as long as he could with the refractory Donatists; it was only at the last, when all other methods had failed, that he thought himself justified by the words of Scripture (Luke xiv. 23) in recurring to compulsion. Calvin's nature was harsh and unamiable, his logic remorseless, and his will sternly resolute; but his life is the witness of his integrity: and when he ordered the burning of Servetus, we cannot doubt that conscience as completely gave him its approval, as it has our own Secretary of State in refusing to reprieve the poisoner of his wife and his friend. In condemning the great men of past ages for acts which appear so shocking to us, we are not, perhaps, sufficiently aware, that in a milder form we are still perpetually guilty of similar injustice and cruelty. When we make dogmas the test of piety,—when we doom men's souls, though we do not touch their bodies,—when we insult them by our compassion for their spiritual condition, or doubt their mental soundness and honesty because they add to or omit some article of our creed, and will not come to Christ and God in our way,—we are still under the influence,—we may hope, the last and expiring influence,—of the same spirit which lighted the fires of Smithfield, left Davidis to languish and die in a dungeon, and drenched the soil of Languedoc with innocent blood.

Much of the extreme asceticism and morbid enthusiasm of ancient Christianity, the outward form of which has been prolonged by endowment and institution into more recent times—in fact, the whole system of monasticism—may be ascribed to intense reaction against the foul and overwhelming sensuality of the later paganism, strengthened by the attendant belief of the approaching end of the world. The contagion was so wide-spreading and so strong, that for some natures there was no safety but in flight, and no repose but in the silence of the cloister. When monachism was established, and celibacy became a rule, sacerdotal interest and ambition corrupted the simplicity and fervour of the primitive motive, to which a false philosophy had already in the first instance given an exaggerated force and a perverted direction; and the most terrible vices of the papal system resulted from the artificial perpetuation of this violent resistance to nature's laws, which had originated under exceptional circumstances, and at the bidding of a sincere though

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extravagant self-devotion. It appears to be a law of Providence, that deep-rooted evils should be expelled from the social system only through some excess of tendency in the opposite direction —a tendency which, to our view of things, may seem to spread too wide and endure too long: yet, when we consider what were the notions of a Kingdom of God which prevailed through the Middle Ages, and how all the highest interests of men were seen through the medium of that governing idea, we can well understand, that there might be a deep religiousness in the feeling which led such men as Bernard and Norbert to insist on keeping the clergy separate from the world, and to extol the monastic life as the highest form of Christian excellence. Doubtless it puzzles us to find those who were so truly great for their intellectual and moral qualities, yielding to what we now look upon as childish and hurtful superstitions, encouraging asceticism, and sympathising with the worship of saints and a reverence for their relics; and to observe that they were opposed with juster views by men who in all points but a certain mediocrity of common sense, were confessedly their inferiors. What were Jovinian and Vigilantius, as powers in their day, compared with Athanasius, Basil, Jerome, or Chrysostom? But it is the higher order of minds, those more especially which are endowed with the fire and sensibility of genius, that religion seizes with an attractive force, and carries away with a bewildering enthusiasm, to which ordinary rules are altogether inapplicable, plunging them into depths as well as lifting them up to heights, which common minds are equally spared and denied by the more perfect balance of their feebler powers. Indeed, there is something vague and limitless, something immeasurable by human faculty, in every expression of deep and earnest religion. In the very extravagances which mark its course through the ages, in its slow and irregular growth, in its long periods of partial development and partial retrocession, in the apparent scantiness and meagreness of its visible fruits, in the very passions which it has roused and the strife which it has engendered,—there is a certain vastness, which, so far from furnishing a ground of distrust or food for scepticism, is to us the sign and the witness of a power whose origin and issue transcend the bounds of time, whose subject is the immortal spirit, and whose sphere is eternity.

But it is time to draw these general speculations to a close, and to ask what result is yielded by this survey of the Past, capable of an application to our immediate Future. What is the principle which has been at work in all the changes that have passed before us, often abused to their own purposes by ambition and selfishness, yet often stimulating the grandest heroism and the noblest self-devotion, and, with all its perversion and

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wildness, ever preserving humanity from absolute lapse into hard and gross materialism? What is Christianity?—It is, as we understand it, a sense of the infinite value of the spiritual in man, as revealed by Christ. It is the devotion of all our faculties and affections to realise the ideal of humanity as it shines out in him. Christ is manifested as an example of self-sacrifice to the highest truth and the highest good: and in that spirit of self-sacrifice to duty, which purges all pride, selfishness, and carnality out of the soul, man's glory and perfection and his fitness for a higher state of existence consist. True Christian life is a daily renewal of the self-sacrifice of Christ. We believe, that this definition of Christianity will apply to the great heroes of the faith in every former age, however dark the superstitions which enveloped their minds, and however deplorable the errors into which their lives were occasionally betrayed. The essence of Christianity, so conceived, will be found in them all. They lived and died to accomplish what they saw, according to the light within them, as God's truth and God's right; and the thought of that death on the cross gave them power and courage to do their work. It was their vocation, as Christians, to combat wrong and assert the right; and that will remain the vocation of all true Christians to the end of time. The ideal set before them in Christ grew brighter and more distinct from age to age, as their own moral nature expanded; for Christianity is not so much put into man as brought out of him; it is the development of his own inherent religiousness under the kindling influence of the word and life of Christ. There is giving and taking in this case, as in the contemplation of a great work of human art; the spiritual sympathy with the growth of the spiritual life daily becomes more profound and complete. As the true poet sees more in a Madonna of Raffaelle than an ordinary mind, and even reflects on it some of the light of his own genius, though first kindled by a ray from the canvas itself; so our minds, as they are more thoroughly penetrated with the spirit of Christ, feel more and more the beauty that was in his life, and can impart to its historical memorials a more vital glow from our own consciousness. It is because Christ realises the moral ideal as it rises and expands within ourselves, that we own in him the divinest form of humanity.

What is wanted, therefore, for the future progress of Christianity is, not a renewed zeal for perpetuating the dogmatic forms of the past, accomplished, as most of them have, their appointed work, and no longer expressing a living idea,—but more freedom for the full development of our religious nature in the spirit of Christ, that it may grow up into completer harmony with the ideal in him. And it behoves every one who feels this, to exert

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himself with a manly courage and vigour in protecting religious liberty, in the largest sense of that word, against the many enemies by which it is assailed. "Whoever," says the Chevalier Bunsen, "promotes oppression of conscience and mental slavery —yea, who does not with all sincerity and energy labour in faith for the freedom of the human conscience and intellect—is working for Jesuitism, and, as much as in him lies, for the downfall and destruction of his own church and nation. If he be a Protestant, he deserves a double measure of our abhorrence or compassion."*

We do not call upon men to put forth elaborate defences of Christianity, which sometimes raise more doubts than they answer. We do not expect any thing from a revised enforcement of the old arguments from miracle and prophecy. Such reasonings appear to us not very well adapted to the present state of the public mind, which is more likely to be convinced by a clear and unforced exhibition of the correspondence of the religion of Christ to the profoundest wants and noblest aspirations of human nature, and of its preeminent fitness to encounter the many forms of low selfishness and worldly anxiety which spring up in the rank soil of a high material civilisation. Many of the deeper questions which attach to the subject of Christianity in thoughtful and speculative minds, can only be solved by a sound and comprehensive religious psychology, founded on the indisputable realities of human nature, as they have been illustrated by the progressive Christian light of eighteen centuries.† But the results of such an analysis must be tested and verified by a reference to that highest model of humanity, which shines upon us through the light of ages, and to whose ever-brightening lineaments all that is purest and noblest within us gives spontaneous response.

* *Signs of the Times*, p. 444.

† This subject is touched on very satisfactorily in several passages of Schwarz's able and interesting volume, which we regret that want of space has prevented us from noticing as it deserves.

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Art. IX.—AMERICAN ANXIETIES.

Correspondence with the United States respecting Central America, presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, 1856.

Correspondence respecting the Mosquito Territory, presented to the House of Commons, July 3d, 1848, *in pursuance of their Address of April 3d*, 1848.

Correspondence with Mr. Wallenstein, Consul-General for Guatemala and Costa Rica, presented to both Houses of Parliament, 1856.

Notes on Central America, particularly the States of Honduras and San Salvador, and the proposed Honduras Inter-Oceanic Railway. By E. G. Squier, formerly Chargé d'Affaires of the United States to the Republics of Central America: with original maps and illustrations. London: Sampson Low. New York: Harper Brothers. 1856.

Papers relative to Recruiting in the United States, presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty, 1856.

It is a disastrous thing when the very connecting link which binds together the history of nations becomes the greatest obstruction to the freedom and profit of their intercourse; and yet we must fear that thus, in great measure, do matters now stand between England and America. The tie of a common ancestry, the bonds of mental and moral similarity, the community in law, language, and religion, are with a large party in the United States, and with not a few, we fear, amongst ourselves, little more than galling memorials of that identity of race and temper which, more almost than any other influence, heightens the bitterness of every dispute. The tie of community in race between rival nations is too often like an isthmus between neighbouring continents,—at first a connecting pathway of union, but later an irritating obstacle to the exchanges of a riper civilisation, and a permanent temptation to petty quarrels;—at once bridging the wholesome chasm which would mark out clearly the limits of right, and interposing an unwelcome barrier to the free interchange of equal benefits. An isthmus is the true place for a quarrel,—too narrow for a natural mingling of states, just wide enough for a hostile meeting of statesmen; and what Panama is to our foreign ministers, that the isthmus of Anglo-Saxon descent is becoming to the two peoples,—a bond tight enough to excite jealousy, and too narrow to inspire affection. Could it be severed,—could the "estranging

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sea" flow in between our nationalities as well as between our empires,—we should probably look upon each other with a more genial and respectful interest. England might then cease to feel a tacit reproach in the voracity of American ambition, and America to see insult in the dumb indifference of English hauteur. It is not a little because our own deep though suppressed delight in empire shrinks from seeing itself translated into ugly and boastful words, that we so intensely detest the frothy vaunts of our filibustering relatives; it is not a little because they in their turn are conscious of a devouring pride of caste themselves, that they are so repelled by the frigid assumption of English superiority. But notwithstanding this worst embitterment of our mutual discords, that we have so intimate and rankling a sense in *ourselves* of the evil which we see in each other, the best English and the best Americans have the closest possible sympathies. They hold in common the great political faith of all Protestant nations,—that government should be on openly-confessed principles, not a secret art of dexterous management; and that, aiming constantly at being *self*-government, it should respect, as far as possible, the conscientious scruples of the resistance it is obliged to overrule. These have ever been the two leading political principles of the Anglo-Saxon Protestants,—no reserve, and no unnecessary pressure;—an open exposition of policy; and plenty of room for the free expansion of protesting minorities. With little enough tenderness or delicacy about *unclaimed* rights, true Anglo-Saxons have always by nature respected honest firmness, even when unbacked by force, and have never endured an attempt to manage them by underhand statesmanship. These were exactly the two grounds of their hatred to the Stuarts,—that that foolish and despotic race strove to trample out even the *signs* of discontent, instead of permitting it, so far as it was amenable to practical authority; and that they strove to practise upon them by trickery, instead of openly insisting on their own way. And this possession of a common political tradition unites the people of England and America, we trust, *still*, not merely by a bond of memory, which, taken alone, is apt to nourish jealousy, but by extending that memory into a common political aim. Between England and the northern states of America, at least, we firmly believe that this tie is strong and lasting.

But over the temporary government of America, and over the whole face,—and not, we fear, the mere *surface* of society in the south,—there has come a sad change, which two evil spirits have mainly conspired to work—the despotic spirit nourished by slavery, and the time-serving artful spirit nourished by the necessity for swaying a vast democracy. Englishmen are strangely

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metamorphosed by living mainly with their inferiors, or by living only amongst those whose interests and opinions are identical with their own. No national character needs social *compression* more than ours. Naturally unsympathetic and phlegmatic, our countrymen are apt to become insolent by living with subordinates, and selfishly inconsiderate by living only with equals. We need a high state of social condensation,—the weight and pressure of classes above and classes below,—to keep alive in us the characteristic virtues of the Anglo-Saxon race,—fairness in the whole people, and candour in the rulers. Take off this pressure, as it is taken off in the straggling settlements of young America, and the solid fair Englishman is likely enough to expand into the swaggering selfish democrat, who, having never felt the weight or solicitation of other claims, has forgotten his respect for the liberty of others, and is as enraged by opposition as ever was the selfish mob of Athens or Rome. Except in the large cities of the north, there is no sufficient complexity of interests in the American society; all its members are on a dead level, having the same wishes and needs, and no daily experience of the necessity of concession to conflicting claims. The consequence is, that the people—like an only child—get the tyrannical habits of an *only class;* and their rulers quickly learn the mean *arts* of humouring them, finding that their spoiled democratic temper brooks no resistance. It is worse still where the demon of slavery is at work under a warmer sun than usually quickens the frigid temper of the Saxon race. There a spirit of despotism is nourished in the place of that phlegmatic fairness which is our national safeguard, and the regard for the scruples and convictions of protesting minorities is lost in the domineering of arbitrary passion.

These are the influences which have alienated America's sympathies from England, and brought forth their full fruits in the administration of President Pierce. That administration, as all England is now repeating, does not represent the true American nation; but it does represent emphatically those evil influences that threaten to break the ties between us and them. It is the administration in which slavery has broken its parole, and passed the compromise-limits within which it had solemnly pledged itself to stay. It is the administration in which a great territory has not only been laid open to possible slavery by the influence of the federal government, but forced into a reception of actual slavery by invaders at whom that government has connived. And while all Nebraska has been exposed to the attack, Kansas seized, Lawrence sacked, and Mr. Senator Sumner beaten in the Senate-chamber, all with the same accompaniments of cowardly artifice, in the interests of the domestic in-

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stitution,—the government that has fostered these measures has been cajoling the democratic party by gratifying their feelings of international jealousy and vaulting ambition. The civil war in Kansas—the growth of filibustering expeditions—the recognition of Walker's conquest of Nicaragua—the provocation given to England—are all fruits of that evil graft on American statesmanship, the nursing of a despotic democracy.

This is the great anxiety that we feel in contemplating our relations with American politicians; not the danger of the immediate crisis, which is, we trust, slight, but the increase of the discreditable species of statesmen in America who have brought the immediate crisis on. Will the present government yield up their places to men who will carry on their policy, or will the older and better type of statesmen return? Shall we again see a government elected that governs for the sake of popular power, or one that honestly *spends* its power, without drawing bills on the future, for the sake of good government? Will the statesmen who are most subservient to popular passion, and most cold and cruel when they once feel popular passion at their back, continue to rise above the heads of those who would sacrifice themselves to heal the civil disorders of the Republic? If so, a rupture with England, at no distant date, is, we believe, inevitable; for it seems certain that the only art by which these statesmen can retain a hold on both north and south at once, is to enlist the former on their side by an exciting external policy, and the latter by an exciting internal policy,—gratifying national ambition by a defiance of the supposed national rival, and gratifying the passions and interests of the planters by assisting the encroachments of their peculiar institution. Yet, in the worst event, there is good ground of hope that such a policy may overreach itself; for the north cannot now long continue to endure the burden of "imputed" sins laid upon it in virtue of its alliance with the south; and unless the aggressive policy is successful for a time in staving off the separation, we may soon forget all jealousies in a hearty union with the better half of a nation whose feelings of rivalry and suspicion spring mainly from a false connection.

At present, however, our only concern with the internal policy of the American government is in its bearing on their foreign relations. Yet no one can understand the latter without interpreting them by the principles which regulate the former. It is not simply that all who foster internal dissension are obliged to divert the inflammatory tendency by the appliance of external irritants. It is not merely that where the civil administration is a system of gambling, the foreign administration must be of the same kind—a sort of hedging your bet. This is not

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all; for besides this there is a special relation between the policy of slavery and the policy of encroachment. The filibuster is own son to the slave-owner. The one treats feeble states as the other treats feeble races. The negro exists to be subjected; the undefended province exists to be annexed. It is assumed that these lower races and states are given moral and political life for the same reason for which animals meant for human food are given physical life,—only because vitality enables them to supply more perfectly the higher order of beings who consume them with the fibre and tissue their organisation needs. The world of nature, though given us to subdue, is conceived to be too light a nutriment for the higher races of men; rational life and political life of lower orders must be fed upon as well, in order to sustain the higher types of social organisations. A servile class and tributary states are desiderata for the completer leisure of a directing intelligence.

The anxious points about the American foreign policy are these two—this restless hunger of the democracy for new prey, and the utter slipperiness and *unreliable* character of the statesmen. Statesmen as aggressive and as meddling, as we may prove subsequently, England has often had; but English statesmen have never been *backed* by a universal popular rapacity for encroachment; and, what is more important still, English statesmen do really, we believe, feel themselves bound by both the spirit and the letter of their predecessors' pledges. They feel that England's honour is something distinct from the honour of a temporary ministry, and that, however much a system of policy may rightly change with a change of the cabinet, promises given by one administration must be scrupulously adhered to by another if foreign nations are to respect and trust the British crown. But the whole course of the late negotiations with America show that by the Pierce administration such obligations are lightly felt. The problem of foreign policy with them is to make it supplement the home policy by winning the favour of those who are indifferent or dissatisfied about their internal measures. It is impossible for any one who has studied these negotiations to believe that the American cabinet adjust their foreign relations according to their real estimate of the merits of the case on which they decide; we cannot avoid the belief that their course is mainly determined by a regard to other exigencies. It is rumoured that the President proposed, in order to avoid dismissing the English ambassador, Mr. Crampton, that the embassy should be altogether closed for the present. Whether there be truth or not in that report, we can well conceive that to the tactics of this administration the permanent residence of an English ambassador must be rather a perplexity than an

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assistance. The *idea* of a foreign embassy is, to afford such an opportunity of immediate personal intercourse and mutual explanations between two governments on any sudden emergency as will prevent misunderstanding. For example, a report comes to America that H.M.S. Plumper has suddenly gone in at an English consul's request and captured a port in Central America contrary to treaty. The Senate and Congress at Washington are in a fever, and make speeches against Great Britain. It is to be feared that some U.S. commander will be sent out with instructions that may lead to a collision with H.M.S. Plumper. The government, therefore, refers to the English ambassador; and if his report be at once decisive and soothing in disclaiming the act, such a collision is avoided, and the ministry are able to appease the public until it is officially disclaimed. The presence of some one who has a full knowledge of British affairs and the purposes of British ministers, is likely to have explanatory effects in these cases. But if the object of the ministry is not to get at real facts,—if they desire to have *the refusal* of a quarrel up to the latest possible moment, and covet, in short, a general power of either gradually taking offence, or gradually forgiving and forgetting, or of chronic grumbling without coming to an issue at all, according as they find the public mind answers to the notes they strike upon it,—then there is nothing so embarrassing as personal intercourse. Nothing is so easy as to accommodate a *despatch* to such views; you may balance the pacific turn of one sentence by the indignant turn of another, and reserve the right of ultimately taking up either line; in short, you may leave the matter entirely *in statu quo*, and yet produce a document. But personal intercourse on these terms is not so easy to manage. If you find explanations quite satisfactory, you may incautiously betray it, when a cabinet meeting to consider a despatch would have discovered some satisfactory reason for not being satisfied. In short, if the object is to act upon a mutual understanding of the real facts, a personal communication is excellent; but if the object is to shape a course by reference to certain *other* circumstances which the real state of the facts does not affect, nothing can be more perplexing.

And this appears to us to be the case with the foreign policy of the present American administration. They have often desired to keep their course in suspense, not for further knowledge *on* the case, but for further knowledge *off* the case. Their foreign tactics have of course been accommodated to foreign events, but regulated and caused by home considerations. They have not scrupled to stretch to the utmost the literal construction of compacts entered into by their predecessors, and to avoid as much as possible either the receiving or the giving of prema-

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ture explanations, which might have closed too early a promising vista of dispute. There can be no better illustration of this policy than in the astute manœuvres which have ended in the dismissal of our ambassador and of the three English consuls. The matter, important as it may prove in its results, is intrinsically dull and insignificant; but as indicating how necessarily the want of frankness and simplicity of purpose in any cabinet tends to nullify, or rather change into a negative quantity, the advantage of the ambassadorial system, it has great interest, and is worth a few words of comment. It illustrates moreover strikingly the mode in which the vehement jealousies of a vast democracy produce slippery statesmen, and slippery statesmen aggravate the jealousies of the democracy.

The winter that witnessed our disasters before Sebastopol seems to have been one also of great privation in North America, and large offers of enlisting poured in upon our consuls and were reported to our government, who were naturally anxious to accept them. The law of the United States, however, forbids not only recruiting for foreign service, but "hiring or retaining" any person to go beyond the limits or jurisdiction of the United States "with intent to be enlisted." This our minister at Washington, Mr. Crampton, early ascertained; but was induced by the wish of his government to avail himself of these offers, as far as was possible without actually "hiring or retaining" recruits. In conversation with the United States secretary of state, Mr. Marcy, he mentioned the desire entertained by the English government to receive on British territory the help offered, and to make their terms widely known; but to do nothing that could not be done without a violation of the American law; and ascertained, as he thought, that though the law would be literally enforced, there was no disposition to interpret it very strictly or to strain its prohibitions, Mr. Marcy himself volunteering the remark, that "any number of persons who chose" might go into British territory to enlist. Mr. Crampton's subordinate, Mr. Lumley, also stated to Mr. Marcy, that Mr. Crampton "believed that every thing that could be done might be effected legally;" and it is abundantly clear that the American government understood that an effort was being made, within the supposed limits of the law, to encourage those who wished it to join the British service at Halifax. We do not doubt that the *spirit* at least of the law was violated by defraying the cost of the journey to Halifax for all those who were desirous to enlist; although all pledges, engagements, or retaining-fees, were emphatically discountenanced by the British authorities. But the procedure of the American government is the point of interest. It is clear that on the 7th of May they were first convinced that something was authorised

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by our government which would give ground for quarrel.* Mr. Marcy smiled on the gentleman who communicated this news. He "appeared much pleased with this communication." He said "he had no doubt that the course pursued by Mr. Crampton was the proper one; he was indeed convinced of this from having seen Mr. Crampton's instructions to her Majesty's consuls when the question of recruiting first arose." And yet this was the despatch which, as he afterwards admits, roused his suspicions and suggested the idea of a quarrel. Instead of remonstrating and suggesting the danger of breaking the spirit of the law, there was much careful delay and collection of information; then, on the 9th of June, a note sent to England without any word on the matter to Mr. Crampton, though it was known that "he had been assigned some duty in the service" which indeed constituted the chief grievance. All June and July this reserve lasted, the American government collecting evidence, and carefully avoiding any explanation with those who might have stopped them. In July a British consul was arrested for interfering in this service. Early in August came a full apology from Lord Clarendon for any unintentional infraction of the law, with a notice that all the proceedings which had been supposed to be within the law, but might probably have led to its violation, had been summarily stopped. But to accept an apology was the last thing then wished by the American government. They had the materials now in their hands for some exciting public prosecutions. The ill-success of England and France, then occupied in hopelessly making fifth parallels and trying new generals, and the vigorous defence of Russia in Sebastopol, had considerably turned the tide of American sympathy. The United States Attorney-General was just preparing to call the English minister and consuls "malefactors screened from conviction" by their government; and to assert that if the letter of the law had *not* been infringed, the international offence was thereby doubled. It was now discovered that a new cry of injury could be raised, quite apart from the violation of the law, and more likely to excite popular enthusiasm—that of violated "Sovereign Territorial Rights;" and on this accordingly Mr. Marcy insisted in high terms of indignation, on the 5th of September, in the very first words of expostulation which Mr. Crampton had received directly from the

* See Mr. Marcy's despatch of the 28th of December, p. 137 of the blue-book on the United States' recruiting. He says, referring to a despatch read to him on the 7th of May, "This paper demands special attention. It conveyed the first distinct intimation that her Majesty's ministers had given instructions for enlistments in the United States, together with the fact that the British minister, Mr. Crampton, had been assigned some duty in that service. . . . Thus it was brought to light that the British cabinet had proposed enlistments in the United States, and had employed her Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary accredited to this government to aid in the undertaking."

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American cabinet. The design is clear, to get full evidence of the British minister's implication before he should be put on his guard; and the unwillingness to seek any explanation of his views and conduct is equally clear.* "Congratulations" are sent by the United States Attorney-General on the complete success of the prosecutions, and inflammatory public letters, quoting unpublished British despatches, are written. Lord Clarendon's reply is naturally for the first time angry; but with it arrives news of our success at Sebastopol, and the news is well received in America. The tone of the American despatches immediately moderates, although some fresh ships of war had been just sent out to join our West India squadron. And finally, after the proclamation of peace, the charge as against our *government*, which was the main thing put forward at the trial in September in such violent declamatory fashion, is wholly withdrawn, and Mr. Crampton dismissed on the ground of private dissatisfaction, amidst the most profuse assurances of general affection for the English cabinet. Clearly the anti-British move did not *take*, as had been hoped, with the democratic party. Perhaps the news of the Crimean success in part foiled it. At all events, we now know that Mr. Buchanan, late the American ambassador, who was the mild medium of communicating Mr. Marcy's able indignation,—who withheld for months on his own responsibility one hostile despatch because he thought the "highly satisfactory" apology of Lord Clarendon, which had crossed it on the way, would render it needless,—and who represents in general the moderate compromise party both on slavery questions and in foreign policy,—has just been unanimously nominated, though opposed by President Pierce, as next President, by the very democratic convention which raised the present President from obscurity to power.

The history of the other great dispute between England and America still more strikingly illustrates the strong influence exercised by the voracious ambition of the filibusters on her statesmen. It is curious, as showing that just as English politicians, conscious of but little support in popular opinion, have become less and less inclined to an encroaching policy, American politicians, conscious of vehement popular support, have become more and more inclined to that policy. As the non-interference doctrine has grown in England, the Monroe doctrine has grown in America; and not merely the Monroe doctrine—that "the American conti-

* "I resisted," says Mr. Marcy, "the evidence tending to implicate him in the recruiting project, until it became too powerful to be longer withstood. Scarcely any thing could have been more painful to me than to be obliged by a high sense of duty," &c. The "pain" does not, however, suggest expostulation, or any desire for relief from the burden of suspicion.

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nents are henceforth not to be considered subjects for future colonisation by any European powers,"—but its natural corollary, that gradually, state by state, every portion of the two continents will become,—as Cuba, Mexico, and Central America, are openly proclaimed by most distinguished and official personages in the United States to have become already,—"a necessity to this country." The filibuster cravings not only urge the government into an encroaching policy, but oblige them, as we have said, to strain the compacts of their predecessors into a sense quite beyond their accepted meanings. This Correspondence with the United States on Central America *opens* with English and American influences struggling together on the isthmus which separates the oceans,—England with a nominal ally on the Atlantic, America with a supplicating friend on the Pacific; and the helpless Spanish American provinces looking, some to England for protection against America, some to America for aid against England. It *closes* with England standing in the same passive attitude of careless protection by the side of his majesty the king of Mosquito, which she has occupied during the whole seven years; while a detachment of American annexationists occupy the state (Nicaragua) which America befriended, and their envoy is duly recognised, in spite of all protests, by President Pierce. But there was a previous chapter to this history, which we ought also not to forget, during which England was the active and America the passive power. Probably very few Englishmen have a passionate interest in the Mosquito alliance, and know or care to know how this rather burdensome potentate came upon our hands.* Yet, in the very amusing correspondence concerning the Mosquito coast presented in 1848 to the House of Commons, they would not only find some account of this matter, but no little instruction as to the nature and derivation of some of these protracted international disputes.

South of the Gulf of Mexico the connecting isthmus seems

* Indeed, our alert Premier himself, who has perhaps more responsibility for the present efficiency of our "protectorate" over the king of Mosquito than any other English statesman, has not quite distinct geographical conceptions of all the kingdoms he deals with. "Geographical as well as political considerations," he tells Sir Henry Bulwer, in a gorgeous despatch that we find amongst this correspondence, "seem to point out the government of Nicaragua, whose capital is Leon, near the Pacific, as the proper guardian of the western outlet of the canal; and the government of Costa Rica, whose capital is San José, on the *Atlantic side of the isthmus*, as the guardian of the eastern outlet." We soon afterwards find a way-worn consul-general speaking of the toils and dangers of a nine-days' journey from the Atlantic over the mountains of the isthmus to San José, which is, in fact, *nearer* to the Pacific than Leon, and has an excellent port on that ocean. And perhaps our Foreign-office "political considerations" are sometimes equally imaginary.

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to copy in mimic outline the figure of the two great continents which, as a whole, it unites. Yucatan, the southern Mexican provinces, Belize (the British settlement), and Guatemala, rudely represent the figure of North America, and narrow down to a neck of land at the bay of Honduras, just as North America itself dwindles down towards the Gulf of Mexico; then the isthmus again bulges out to the east, prefiguring the outline of South America; and on this small model, as we fancy it, the blunt eastern projection which corresponds to Brazil, is mainly occupied by this now famous Mosquito kingdom, which settled down bodily on our Foreign-office,—not without sufficiently irritating results,—some seven years ago. The Mosquito Indians are acquaintances of two hundred years, our statesmen say. Their country is rich in mahogany, rosewood, and cedar. Their coast abounds in turtle. They were friendly with the English buccaneers of the seventeenth century, and early in the eighteenth were more than once "useful" in a strange way to our colonists at Jamaica. There is a copy of an agreement made in 1720, between Sir Nicholas Lawes, the governor of Jamaica, and Jeremy, the king of the Mosquitos (who of course signs it with "his mark"), in which King Jeremy contracts to bring fifty able-bodied Indians to Jamaica, "to pursue and destroy the rebellious negroes lurking in the mountains;" and he "shall continue on such pursuit or expedition six months certain," for which service each man is to receive 2*l.* a month, and the chief 4*l.* The grateful colonists address his Excellency with hearty thanks for an arrangement which they consider "highly of advantage to this island," and cordially vote the supplies. In 1783, after the war with Spain, England was compelled by the treaty of peace to retire from the Mosquito coast, which we then "protected;" and in 1786 the evacuation was insisted on, and took place. Nor till after another war with Spain, and another peace, in the years 1815 or 1816, does there seem to have been any movement towards the revival of the protectorate. But the "royal" family seem still to have been looked after, and the two "princes" educated under English care in Belize or Jamaica. In 1815, the eldest of these asked, it seems, to be crowned in Belize, and formally applied for the renewal of British "protection." Sir George Arthur (the British Superintendent at Belize) writes him a most tutorial and Christian letter upon his coronation in January 1816, in which he remarks, "I sincerely trust you will not be disappointed in the advantage you expect to derive, by its being understood by your subjects that you are in an especial manner under the protection of the British government." The advantage derived was perhaps not very considerable. His majesty's successor is now admitted to be a "fiction." It is curious

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to note the earliest creed instilled into a confiding king by the "protecting" power. It concludes thus:

"You must not be disheartened at the undertaking; if the difficulties before you are great, the greater will be your merit. Remember that Great Britain herself, now adorned with so much glory and magnificence, was once inhabited by barbarous and uncivilised men; and she now generously extends her assistance to redeem your nation from the state of ignorance and rudeness from which she has herself arisen.

You expressed yourself so much pleased with the portrait of his royal highness the Prince Regent [George IV.], that I must beg you will do me the favour to accept it; and I will endeavour to procure another impression from England for your brother, and one for General Robinson.

You appeared greatly surprised that his royal highness looked so like a prince. I feel a pleasure in telling you how this happens, because you may acquire the same appearance. *He always acts like one.*

(Signed) GEO. ARTHUR."

It was a strange form of spontaneous idolatry for an Indian chief. If General Walker induces the family to exchange this royal heirloom for a frowning daguerreotype of President Pierce, we doubt if the protectorate would be less advantageous, though it would surely be more stringent.

From this year (1816) it is clear that British subjects influenced practically the government of Mosquito; but probably no deliberate attempt to encroach upon that influence occurred till 1847. Mr. Chatfield, her majesty's consul-general to the Central American states after they had thrown off their allegiance to Spain, began as soon as the year 1836 to torment the governments of Guatemala, Nicaragua, and Honduras about the boundaries of the Mosquito "kingdom," and their assumed right to deny its independence. In 1842 some "active measures" of Colonel Macdonald (the restless superintendent of Belize, to whose taste for taking islands we are in great part indebted for our present "Central American question"), taken against the port of San Juan di Nicaragua (now Greytown) to enforce the payment of debts to British subjects, indicates the rapid growth of British protection; and it is evident that a "Mosquito" claim to the port of San Juan is already in contemplation. In fact, that port commands the easiest water-transit over the isthmus, as the San Juan river flows from the lake of Nicaragua (near the Pacific) into the Atlantic at Greytown; and the English traders much objected to the custom-dues demanded by the Nicaraguan government. Accordingly, in 1847, Lord Palmerston made an effort to secure this port, addressing to his diplomatic agents in Central America a request that they would *investigate* the original limits to which the Mosquito kingdom was fairly entitled. It was quickly discovered that these limits included the desired

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port; and in October 1847 notice is given that their "Britannic and Mosquitian" majesties will act in concert to reclaim for the kingdom of Mosquito the port of San Juan. An English ship of war will take possession* on New Year's day 1848.

This was done accordingly; and this was the beginning of our embroilment. Frightened Nicaragua strove to enlist the United States in her cause; and early in 1848 President Polk, who was a zealous disciple of the Monroe doctrine, sent out a diplomatic agent to Guatemala with strong Monroe, or, in other words, anti-British instructions for the guidance of his influence in Central America. The efforts of this agent (Mr. Elijah Hise) were directed to neutralising the English influence, and getting possession for an American company of the isthmus transit-route. He concluded a treaty with Nicaragua, by which that government would have granted to the United States an exclusive right of way across her territories (including the San Juan river), and the United States would have guaranteed to Nicaragua in return "the whole of her territory for ever," and become a party to every defensive war in which she might be engaged. This of course would have directly embroiled the kingdom of Mosquito and its allies with the American government. But when this treaty was concluded, in 1849, President Polk was no longer in power, but had been succeeded by President Taylor, who, with his secretary of state, Mr. Clayton, were strongly disposed to a moderate foreign policy and an English alliance; and had these milder statesmen continued long in power, it is conspicuously evident that by this time England would have withdrawn almost entirely her practical interference with the politics of the isthmus. It is most clear that the English statesmen have deeply repented the move which involved them in this confused web of diplomacy. Probably Lord Palmerston never regretted any thing more profoundly than that irrepressible sprightliness of temper which induced him to send out instructions to the West Indian squadron to enforce his majesty the king of Mosquito's immemorial claims on the port of San Juan di Nicaragua. It cheered for a time, no doubt, the dullness of the Foreign-office, and brought in many most amusing despatches; but it has led to the longest and dullest, as well as most inopportune, bit of diplomatic anxiety which a premier ever had to defend to an unsympathising and preoccupied House of Commons. The move which secured Greytown to the king of Mosquito, and brought down the interference of the United States upon the isthmus, had scarcely been made before the European revolutions of 1848

* The Spanish commandant's horror is very amusing. He writes word to his Nicaraguan government for immediate instructions, reminding them that "two months pass in an instant."

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broke upon the stunned ear of our foreign secretary; and he was glad enough to do or yield any thing in honour which would pacify the United States and prevent a contemporaneous perplexity in both worlds. European affairs still wore a most menacing aspect—Hungary and Piedmont had just been overpowered—and the army of the French Republic was barely quartered in Rome—when, in September 1849, Mr. Clayton expressed to the English minister at Washington the desire of the government to come to a friendly and confidential understanding with England concerning the affairs of the isthmus; the more especially as the proposed line of inter-oceanic communication, for the carrying out of which a company was already formed, would otherwise necessarily lead to a collision of interests between their ally Nicaragua and the English protectorate of Mosquito. The United States wished to make a compact with England that neither should interfere in, but both should protect, the region through which the canal would pass. Here was a promising opening for a withdrawal from the encroaching policy. Lord Palmerston knew that ever since his own pounce upon Greytown American influence had been engaged in organising an anti-British party among the Central American republics, of which Nicaragua was the head; and that if thwarted in the pacific overtures, the United States would have conspicuous advantages for securing the desired inter-oceanic communication to themselves, and obstructing British commerce. Accordingly the overtures of Mr. Clayton were eagerly accepted, and he was assured that we had no intention or desire of colonising, fortifying, or occupying the isthmus. The United States cabinet recalled Mr. Hise, and declined to ratify his treaty. Yet, still evidently distrusting to some extent the new moderation of England, they sent out a fresh diplomatic agent, Mr. Squier (the same whose book on Central America is at the head of this article), with instructions apparently timed for the alternative either of British moderation or British ambition. The Monroe doctrine was already running high in popular favour, and even in the estimation of the Senate; and it was only in case they could really make conspicuous the good faith of the English professions, that the Cabinet dared to renounce the favourable opportunity for securing a monopoly in the isthmus which was now held out to them.

The existence of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was endangered and somewhat retarded by the same difficulties which have perplexed its operation. When a clever, restless, strong-headed Englishman or American goes to represent his government among very weak states, and marks how his influence tells,—how helpless and feeble is the executive—how desirous to accept "suggestions"—how timid about offering them—how hesitatingly the

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helmsman holds the wheel, and how he endeavours, by tentative questions, to win advice from his distinguished passengers,—he can scarcely *help* encroaching, especially if he has already gained some practice in that art from the habits of his government. Thus it fell out in Central America. Mr. Chatfield, her majesty's consul-general to Central America, resident in Guatemala, had contracted a habit of peremptory dealings under Lord Palmerston's tuition, and it was not easy now for him to emulate the new moderation of her majesty's advisers. So also it happened with Mr. Squier. He evidently thought his cabinet weakly mild. He made speeches in which he "claimed for the United States a sort of protectorate over the states of Central America amidst which his functions placed him;" and he took steps to secure the monopoly of influence which his superiors were anxious to renounce. A contest ensued. Mr. Chatfield suddenly called in H.M.S. Gorgon to take the important island of Tigre from Honduras, in liquidation of some unpaid English claim. The English flag went up. But this very island had excited Mr. Squier's especial yearnings on behalf of his government. It was situated in the bay of Fonseca, on the Pacific coast of Honduras, had an admirable harbour, and was altogether a tempting station for the Californian line of packets. He had just succeeded in obtaining its provisional cession to the United States for eighteen months, as the pledge from Honduras of their assent to a commercial treaty which he had signed with Nicaragua, by which the new inter-oceanic communication was to be secured to a United States company. It was with great disgust, therefore, that he found himself anticipated by Mr. Chatfield. The cabinets of Washington and London did not, however, profess to support either of these eager gentlemen. Mr. Chatfield was instructed to give up his island, and Mr. Squier took possession *without* instructions. For more than a year afterwards the triumphant Stars and Stripes proclaimed Mr. Squier's independence of the views of his government.

In the mean time the American Transit Company—which conveys passengers and light goods over the isthmus pending the formation of the great ship-canal, and which is, we imagine, the only part of the inter-oceanic company that is at all likely to succeed in existing—actually got under weigh. Apparently it has always taken the anti-British view; which is the more important, as its *de facto* power promises to be, to this part of the isthmus, something very like the early influence of our own East India Company in Hindoostan. This Company has constantly professed to derive its rights solely from the State of Nicaragua, and to ignore as much as possible any other claims on the San Juan river and Greytown; and in this profession we

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may be sure it is still more enthusiastic now that Nicaragua has become implicitly a possession of the United States.

With all these various influences working upon the isthmus, it is intelligible enough that any treaty entered into by the governments without allowing for their existence would be likely to be more theoretic than practical. And so it proved. After much discussion, the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was agreed to in April 1850; a treaty which was intended as a *preliminary* to another, by which the Mosquito Indians should have their claims finally settled and their boundary limited, the English government withdrawing all interference except the protection needful to prevent an aggression by the other states on the territory so limited. In the mean time Greytown was made a free port; and, though remaining provisionally under the Mosquito flag, it was agreed upon that it and the San Juan river should be immediately ceded, with a considerable margin of territory, to any of the Central American states that might be powerful enough to secure civil order in a port where all the commerce of the world was likely to meet; on condition, however, that the Mosquitos should be secured by treaty in the undisturbed possession of the district remaining to them. British interference in the affairs of Greytown was withdrawn, and the Mosquito flag retained by the citizens (chiefly Americans) only till it could be decided to what government the town should be ceded—a question still theoretically undetermined.

The main article of the Clayton-Bulwer preliminary treaty —which unfortunately was never supplemented by its intended successor, simply because Nicaragua obstinately declined to take Greytown on the terms of recognising the Mosquito power at all, and declined moreover to permit Costa Rica or any other state to do so—was as follows:

"The Governments of Great Britain and the United States hereby declare that neither the one nor the other will ever obtain or maintain for itself any exclusive control over the said [Inter-oceanic] ship-canal; agreeing that neither will ever erect or maintain any fortifications commanding the same, or in the vicinity thereof, or occupy, or fortify, or colonise, or assume or exercise any dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or, any part of Central America; nor will either make use of any protection which either affords or may afford, or any alliance which either has or may have, to or with any state or people, for the purpose of erecting or maintaining any such fortifications, or of occupying, fortifying, or colonising Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito Coast, or any part of Central America, or of assuming or exercising dominion over the same. Nor will Great Britain or the United States take advantage of any intimacy, or use any alliance, connection, or influence that either may possess with any state or government through

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whose territory the said canal may pass, for the purpose of acquiring or holding, directly or indirectly, for the subjects or citizens of the one, any rights or advantages in regard to commerce or navigation through the said canal which shall not be offered, on the same terms, to the subjects or citizens of the other."

These terms were qualified, however, by a formal declaration, given in before the ratification of the treaty, as to the territory to which this article applied. This declaration was as follows:

"In proceeding to the exchange of the ratifications of the convention signed at Washington on the 19th of April 1850, between her Britannic Majesty and the United States of America, relative to the establishment of a communication by ship-canal between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, the undersigned, her Britannic Majesty's plenipotentiary, has received her majesty's instructions to declare that her majesty does not understand the engagements of that convention to apply to her Majesty's settlement at Honduras, or to its dependencies.

Her Majesty's ratification of the said convention is exchanged under the explicit declaration above mentioned."

And the following is the American minister's explanation of his government's view of this declaration, which has given rise lately to so much discussion:

"MR. CLAYTON TO SIR HENRY BULWER.

Department of State, Washington, July 4th, 1850.

SIR,—I have received the declaration you were instructed by your government to make to me respecting Honduras and its dependencies, a copy of which is herewith subjoined.

The language of Article I. of the convention concluded on the 19th day of April last, between the United States and Great Britain, describing the country not to be occupied, &c., by either of the parties, was, as you know, twice approved by your government, and it was neither understood by them, nor by either of us (the negotiators), to include the British settlement in Honduras, commonly called British Honduras, as distinct from the State of Honduras, nor the small islands in the neighbourhood of that settlement, which may be known as its dependencies. To this settlement and these islands the treaty we negotiated was not intended by either of us to apply. The title to them it is now, and has been my intention throughout the whole negotiation, to leave, as the treaty leaves it, without denying, affirming, or in any way meddling with the same, just as it stood previously.

The Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate, the Hon. William R. King, informs me that 'the Senate perfectly understood that the treaty did not include British Honduras.' It was intended to apply to and does include all the Central American states of Guatemala, Honduras, San Salvador, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica, with their just limits and proper dependencies."

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It is professedly on the interpretation of this compact and its qualifications that England and America have so nearly quarrelled. On the one hand, it is maintained that England thereby agreed to withdraw altogether and at once from all influence in the so-called Mosquito territory, without first seeing the Mosquito rights limited and guaranteed; on the other hand, it is contended that the terms of the treaty, notwithstanding its qualifications, oblige her to withdraw from a great portion of her settlement in Belize (British Honduras), and altogether from the Bay Islands (Ruatan, &c.), which she held at the time of the treaty, and now holds, off the coast of Spanish American Honduras, and which were then a dependency of the government of British Honduras (or Belize).

We have no intention or desire to discuss these questions of interpretation. What we do intend is, to show that the real change has not been in the English understanding, probably not in any one's understanding of the verbal compact, but in the *spirit* of the American government. The real difficulty has not come from England. We firmly believe she cares nothing for the property now disputed; but it is often dangerous and wrong for a nation to yield to peremptory demand where there is no real claim, what she may voluntarily concede in a friendly arrangement. English statesmen repent our former encroaching policy in the isthmus; but they *dare* not now yield to the domineering of Monroe politicians.

The remarkable point in the Central American question is, that for three years after the conclusion of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty no one questioned the good faith and anxiously conceding policy of England. President Taylor and Mr. Clayton were fully satisfied that England really wished to withdraw from her virtual government in the Mosquito territory, and would do so directly she had some guarantee for their safety. President Fillmore and Mr. Webster never doubted this wish. Neither did Mr. Everett (Mr. Webster's successor), one of whose last official acts, before the new government of President Pierce came in, was to report to the Senate the satisfactory eagerness of England to settle this question; and none of these statesmen ever thought of applying the treaty to any settlements of Great Britain which were at the time of its conclusion *de facto* under the government of British Honduras. Lord Clarendon has repeatedly said to the American government what he says in his despatch of April 29th, 1853:

"But, so far from being desirous of assuming voluntarily this attitude of protector, her Majesty's government anxiously wish to be relieved from so irksome and embarrassing a position by an honourable act of settlement, which shall dispose of the question for ever."

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And the only hindrance to giving effect to this desire is the necessity of resisting an exacting policy, and the strained interpretations by which a new cabinet strive to *enlarge* the concessions made to their predecessors. Mr. Webster's impression of the British right is recorded in these papers:

"In the wish felt by her Majesty's government to avoid the possibility of misunderstanding between the citizens and subjects, or of collision between the naval forces of the two countries, Mr. Webster said he entirely concurred; and he stated distinctly that he had by no means held the doctrine which, from the terms of Commodore Parker's communication to Commander Fead, of her Majesty's ship Express, her Majesty's government seemed to infer was that held by the government of the United States, viz.: 'that the United States considered that, from the moment of the conclusion of the convention of the 19th of April 1850, Great Britain had renounced all title to interfere in the affairs of Greytown and Mosquito, and engaged to relinquish that place and country to the state of Nicaragua.' On the contrary, he (Mr. Webster) was, he said, well aware that each government still held its own opinion as to the rights of Nicaragua and Mosquito to Greytown; and it was for this very reason, and in order to remove and reconcile this difference of opinion, admitted to exist, that he was now engaged in negotiations upon the subject with her majesty's legation at Washington."

And Mr. Everett's words in 1853, above alluded to, and contained in a report of which the whole tenor expresses satisfaction with the British policy, are to the same effect:

"However this may be, the communications of the British minister, made by order of his government, will no doubt be regarded as a satisfactory indication of a desire on the part of Great Britain, by resigning the protectorate of Mosquito, to remove one of the most serious embarrassments of the case."

And we take it to be quite clear, that the different construction of the treaty now contended for,—whether legal or not, which we do not enter upon,—is not a construction which any American statesman seriously supposes that the British government really held at the time of ratification. It is a construction now imported into the words of that compact under the stimulus of a more than Monroe policy. With regard to the Mosquito protectorate, no *bonâ fide* question could arise at all, except from a desire for a dispute. For whatever be the exact force of the words of the treaty, our statesmen reiterate, and have practically proved by the cession of Greytown, their desire to "be relieved" of their protectorate altogether, directly they are satisfied that the Mosquito Indians will be allowed to remain unmolested in some defined tract of country. And that they retained the right

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to make this stipulation was practically implied by every American statesman who took part in these discussions up to the date of President Pierce's government. They have given, too, another proof of good faith in this: twice since the date of the treaty has a naval force been brought to bear on Greytown,—once by an English ship, once by an American: by the English to enforce obedience on the part of the American Transit Company to the municipal magistracy of Greytown; by the American, to *defend* the same powerful company from the authority of the municipal magistracy of Greytown; but while the English commander was promptly reprimanded by our government and his act disowned, the American commander was supported and his act approved by the Pierce government, which had just come into power. The Americans, therefore, have less right to doubt that the English government really desires to "be relieved" of the responsibility for the Mosquitos it still holds than the English would have to doubt the sincerity of the American profession of neutrality.

As to the other great point in dispute—our continued possession of Ruatan and the Bay Islands, as they are called, and our enlargements of the original Belize settlement—we cannot but think that, when the British government explicitly excepted "British Honduras and its dependencies" from the operation of the treaty, and the American government expressly admitted that exception, without protest against any *de facto* occupation which they did not conceive it to warrant, it can scarcely be doubted that it was *at the time* intended to except *all that was then known* to be occupied in Honduras by the British, and included under the government of British Honduras. That, at all events, would be the natural construction attached to it by the British government, and which was in fact expressly put upon it by the British diplomatist, Sir Henry Bulwer; and if this were not the meaning given to it by the United States government, they were bound either to claim *in express terms* the operation of the convention for any territory which the British government would be known to include under the words "British Honduras and its dependencies," or else not to plead the treaty against us in respect of any such territory. It can scarcely be maintained that in a purely voluntary contract a larger interpretation can in good faith be subsequently given to the operative words than their conventional and accepted use by the party who is thereby consenting to surrender his privileges; and yet no one will suppose that Great Britain was likely to understand by "British Honduras and its dependencies" any thing less than the possessions which at that time were under the government of that province. But if it could be made clear by the decision of any fair arbiter

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that the cession of Ruatan, or of any other portions of British Honduras, could, in good faith, and without any real spirit of encroachment in the United States government, be asked at our hands, it would be both a folly and a wrong to refuse it. Ruatan and the Bay Islands are certainly much less insignificant to the British Empire than the "frock coat and yellow vest" of Mr. Dallas's attaché, on which Her Majesty was not able to gaze. It is not the loss of possessions, but the concession to a rapidly-accelerating velocity of encroachment, which England ought to fear.

But, apart from all the details of the present contest, there is really a great question involved in the relations of England and the United States to Central America, which at least our statesmen ought to understand clearly and weigh anxiously before deciding on their future policy. They have decided, rightly we think, not to give way to any feeling of resentment at the dismissal of their minister, but to avail themselves as far as possible of the powers that have *apparently** been intrusted to Mr. Dallas to come to some final settlement of a weary and dangerous dispute. Now Mr. Marcy throws out a significant hint in his last despatch that the President would greatly prefer cancelling the treaty altogether, and leaving to both countries their previous right to colonise, fortify, and control Central America, to any settlement of the disputes that had arisen under it *in favour of* Great Britain. Nor can we doubt that, with the state of Nicaragua now virtually in possession of American forces and ready for annexation, this would be a far more popular measure in the States than any other mode of settlement. If this were the result of all this unfortunate negotiation, it would be a most urgent question what ought to be our line of action:—to withdraw honourably and quietly from all concern in the confused politics of the isthmus?—or to avail ourselves, as America would quickly do, of our present position there to establish a permanent influence side by side with that of the United States?

There is no doubt that the first course would be by far the most easy and tranquil policy. Two great powers cannot exist within limits so confined, and with uneasily defined boundaries, without infinite danger of collision and endless dispute. Nor should we hesitate for an instant in regarding it as far better to abandon to the United States a predominant influence over a

* We say *apparently*, because nothing can be more perplexed and doubtful than the wording of Mr. Marcy's last despatch. It might be interpreted to mean that Mr. Dallas had full powers, or that he had virtually none, to settle the points at issue. Comparing it with the lucid and masterly statements that have generally come from the same hand, one cannot help fearing that this see-sawing is intended as a trap.

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region that is in the direct line of their communication with California, and in a climate in which many of their subjects, more easily than the British, could find a *permanent* home, were it not for the menacing character which the civilisation of the southern states of America is rapidly assuming. We have attempted, in the earlier part of these remarks, to trace the radical connection between the filibuster policy and the institution of slavery; we are deeply convinced that the two are natural allies; and that while the one is spreading like a cancer over the fairest region of North America, its seeds will be carried by the other into every land which these hungry crusaders annex. We have spoken in the course of this article of a Mr. Squier, an able person who was an apostle of the high Monroe doctrine during his diplomatic duties in the isthmus, and who kept hold on a valuable island in the name of the United States long after his government had disclaimed and cancelled his act. Our own agents have sometimes done nearly as much. But they represent no popular feeling at home; Mr. Squier represents a vast democracy. Now let us mark the tone in which, in his recent book, he connects the policy of encroachment with the doctrine of caste:

"If the United States, as compared with the Spanish American republics, has achieved an immeasurable advance in all the elements of greatness, that result is eminently due to the rigid and inexorable refusal of the dominant Teutonic stock to debase its blood, impair its intellect, lower its moral standard, or peril its institutions by intermixture with the inferior and subordinate races of man. In obedience to the ordinances of Heaven, it has rescued half a continent from savage beasts and still more savage men, whose period of existence has terminated, and who must give place to higher organisations and a superior life. Short-sighted philanthropy may lament, and sympathy drop a tear, as it looks forward to the total disappearance of the lower forms of humanity; but the laws of nature are irreversible. *Deus vult*—it is the will of God!

From this point of view, it appears that the only hope of Central America consists in averting the numerical decline of its white population, and increasing that element in the composition of its people. If not brought about by a judicious encouragement of emigration or an intelligent system of colonisation, the geographical position and resources of the country indicate that the end will be attained by those more violent means, which among men, as in the material world, often anticipate the slower operations of natural laws. To avert the temporary yet often severe shocks which they occasion, by providing for the necessities of the future, is the true mission, and should be the highest aim of the patriot and statesman. Central America will be fortunate if she shall be found to number among her sons men adequate to the comprehension and control of the circumstances under which she is

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placed, and which are every day becoming more complicated and exigent."

Now this is the tone and temper of men of the highest culture and calibre amongst the American filibusters. There can be no doubt that where they rule, slavery will follow them wherever slave-labour is valuable, as it is in the coffee-plantations of the isthmus. It must be remembered, that there is at least one "inferior" race which does *not* seem doomed to die out before the presence of the European, which is not so happy as to wither quietly away under the pressure of the evils which the European survives, but which frequently multiplies in the face of tyranny, like the Israelites in Egypt. And we must not forget that, generally at least, the political spirit which praises God as it beholds the dwindling tribes of Indians and annexes feebly independent republics, first learnt its unscrupulous creed in the early acquired habit of *using* and scorning the African race. And should it ever get the power, it would eagerly pour through the isthmus, as through a convenient funnel, into poor South America a drenching stream of the same delirious passions that now rend and infuriate the North. If ever this accursed institution be firmly riveted on this narrow causeway between the two worlds, it is obvious enough what immense strength it would give to slave-legislation in Mexico and the South American continent.

We are profoundly convinced that the filibuster policy does not merely arise in the political aggressiveness of an active and energetic nation,—this is only the *best* aspect which it assumes in the northern states; but in its commoner forms it is compounded of social insolence and rapacity, and arises from utter hardness to the rights and wants of others. Within certain limits we believe it to be desirable that stronger States should absorb helpless ones; but there are two criteria which distinguish this legitimate absorbent process from the lawless rapacity of which we are speaking. First, the helplessness of a State or nation must be *moral* and not merely physical, in order to excuse or justify its annexation. It must not be the mere weakness of defencelessness, but the weakness of disease, paralysis, corruption. Many nations physically, because numerically and locally, weak, are morally sound and strong. To denationalise these is a political crime. And again, no State, however corrupt, can be in the general way usefully or rightly governed and controlled except by those whose previous relations with it, knowledge of it, sufferings from it, give them a *natural* right and capacity to interfere in its affairs. It is as in individual relations: if strangers were to seek out human incapables in order to administer their affairs,

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there would be grosser injury done than if all the incapacity in the world were allowed to range unrestrained; it would become a system of mere cruelty or plunder. And so, corrupt or helpless states can only be rightly subdued and ruled by nations already in defined political and moral relations to them. Policy like Lord Dalhousie's is no filibuster policy; he has only swept away the corrupt pretence of government, and that, too, in such close and permanent contact with the English administration as to blight all its highest influence. Natural relationship and the knowledge of moral incapacity are good and sufficient grounds for assuming authority. But the rumour of distant gain, and the knowledge of physical defencelessness, are the grounds of a filibuster policy. And among the cultivated nations of modern times it is a policy which chiefly *thrives* where the institution of slavery has made men politically insolent.

These are the considerations which make us seriously doubt whether it would be a wise or a right policy in Great Britain to withdraw her influence wholly from the isthmus, in order to avoid the risk of quarrels. It would be, we fear, to abandon it to the mercy of freebooters like Walker, bringing in their train such apostles as Stringfellow and Atchison. Yet we cannot but think that this general question must arise, that the principle of the Clayton-Bulwer treaty will be found untenable, and America and England will be obliged one or both to give up their beautiful *rôle* of unearthly genii hovering protectingly above the new line of inter-oceanic commerce. If, indeed, there existed any local States commanding the force requisite to control the turbulent stream of Californian emigration which is constantly sweeping over this ground, to them it would best be confided. But the Clayton-Bulwer treaty was framed in utter ignorance of the excessive weakness of Nicaragua and some of her neighbours, and of the excessive restlessness of the transitory population. Every year has shown that if this treaty excludes the jealousy of the strong, it excludes also the security of a strong government. Implicitly or explicitly, American influence must be powerful on the isthmus, if there is to be any power at all. And all the evidence shows that a double protectorate will probably introduce far bitterer strife than even actual colonies side by side. Protectors are mere rivals, while neighbouring settlers have common interests and sympathies. We believe that the eventual question must be, whether England is to retire altogether, or to get, like America, a firm lodgment on the central states. The former is the easier and more obviously safe course. We cannot feel convinced that it is the right one. Perhaps the anxiety may be saved us. Perhaps the political power of America may soon

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split, like the continent itself, into two distinct masses; the one embodying the nobler Anglo-American elements of civilisation, and rejecting those evil tendencies in the other that we so much dread. All the great *commercial* power would then belong to the northern states; and after a real political separation on the grand question of slavery, theirs would be the most powerful possible check to the political principles of the south. Already on the isthmus the Transit Company—a purely commercial interest—has, we know, gained great strength; and that strength would then be the strength of the North—the strength of order and freedom. America might then be a stronger bulwark against America than Great Britain, with or without his "Mosquitan majesty," could ever hope to become.

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THE NATIONAL REVIEW.

OCTOBER 1856.

ART. I.—THE GOWRIE CONSPIRACY.

The History of the Kirk of Scotland. By Mr. David Calderwood, sometime Minister of Crailing. Edited from the original Ms. in the British Museum. By the Rev. R. Thompson. Printed for the Wodrow Society. Edinburgh, 1845.

Gowrie; or, the King's Plot. By G. P. R. James. London: Sims and M'Intyre.

IN the months of August and September, in the year 1600, a controversy was going forward in Edinburgh of a very singular description. James VI., king of Scotland and king-expectant of England, had declared himself to have been exposed to a frightful danger, from which he had been delivered by a series of miracles. There was no apparent ambiguity in the circumstances; and in the main features of the story no deficiency of evidence. The hand of a ruffian had been on the king's throat; the point of a dagger at his breast. In facts so palpable as these he could not easily be mistaken; and while he published in the form of a proclamation an elaborate narrative of the attack upon him, he was anxious that his subjects should at once be made aware of the misfortune which they had so narrowly escaped, and should unite with him in an expression of gratitude to the Power which had interfered so signally in his behalf. The ministers of the church in Edinburgh were therefore invited to assist in this proper and natural proceeding; and on so remarkable an occasion objection could not have been easily anticipated. The duty which was laid before them was obvious, and ought to have been welcome; to hesitate was almost to declare themselves accomplices in the treason.

The ministers, on their part, had no thought of disloyalty; and yet such was their singular opinion of the king's character,

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that the course which seemed so plain was full of difficulty. They did not wish to affront James; but still they hesitated. The injunctions of the council were delivered to them; instead of obeying these injunctions, they held a meeting to discuss the conduct which they were to pursue.

At length, after a debate, they repaired with their reply to the lords; and in spite of the direct and elaborate narrative which had been laid before them, they declared "that they were not certain of the treason, and therefore could make no mention of it." They would say in general, "that the king had been delivered from a great danger;" further than this they could not and would not commit themselves. James's own letters were produced. If the contents of them were more than naked lies, the conspiracy seemed as certain as evidence could make it; the council inquired if they would consent at least to read these letters. The ungracious divines replied that they could not read the king's letters to their congregations when they doubted the truth of them. It were better, and safer, to introduce a qualifying clause, and say, "if the report be true." Perhaps no anointed sovereign, heathen or Christian, was ever placed by his subjects in so uncomplimentary a situation. The lords of the council threatened; but threats were never efficacious with Scotch clergy. James himself hurried back to Edinburgh to reason them out of their incredulity; but his words were as powerless as his writings. They would offer no thanksgivings for an escape from a conspiracy unless they were assured that there had been a conspiracy from which to escape; in other words, unless they could satisfy themselves that the king was not lying to them. "Conviction," they said, "was the gift of God;" and "it had not pleased God," in the present instance, that they should be convinced.

We propose, with the assistance of the Calderwood papers, which contain all the known particulars, to examine the occasion of this embarrassing collision,—the famous so-called plot of the Earl of Gowrie and his brother to imprison or destroy the king. The ministers, it will be seen, were not wholly wrong; and yet James hardly deserved the position in which they placed him. If we could forget the fearful features of the story, the quarrel, which lingered for years, would form one of the most grotesque episodes in the history of these islands. At all events, both in itself and in its consequences, it is curiously illustrative of the condition of Scotland in the last years in which that country existed as a separate kingdom.

To enable our readers to understand the circumstances (or to understand them at least as far as they are ever likely to be understood), we must refresh their recollection with a few words

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of preamble. Most people have read some history of North Britain in the sixteenth century: we believe, however, that they never met with any history more difficult to remember, because it is a mere record of anarchy;—a string of incidents linked together in order of time, but with no organic connection.

The sixty years which followed the death of James V. may be described briefly as a period in which every conceivable element of disorder combined to make government impossible. Minorities, civil wars, wars of religion, treasons, villanies, depositions, had followed one upon another with scarcely an interval; and the sixth James, who was in all likelihood conceived in crime, whose cradle was in the midst of murder, and whose earliest recollections must have been thronged with images of terror, grew to manhood the victim of a series of revolutions, in which the seizure of his own person was the unvarying preliminary movement. When we turn the pages of the annals of that time, we wonder that any good could have befallen at last a nation among whom such things were possible; we wonder, at least, till we remember the Reformation, which alone formed the late and nobler type of the Scottish people. There was, however, this difference between the Reformation in Scotland and in England, that here it was the work of the government,—there it established itself in spite of the government; and the attitude of mutual opposition outlived its proper causes. The original discord was never properly appeased; and Protestantism, while it purified and ennobled the masses of the population, was unable to extend its renovating influence among the court and the aristocracy. The Protestant faith, in its proper spirit and sense, except for the few years which followed the expulsion of Mary, was regarded by the ruling classes with jealousy and dread; and far from being able to lend tone and strength to authority, its chief business, and unfortunately at last its chief pleasure, was to tie the hands of a treacherous nobility, which was ever on the watch for its destruction.

Thus even the Reformers were driven to increase the social disorder by weakening the executive authority; and for the repression of the normal forms of human wickedness there was no power any where. Every petty lord or chieftain was a king in his own eyes and in the eyes of his vassals. They lived each as they pleased, doing good or doing evil as their disposition prompted them; and faction, treason, and revenge, tore the heart of the country. The sword was the only ruler. Enormous crimes were followed by enormous retaliations; and the spasmodic efforts of justice by fresh villanies. Beton and David Rizzio were despatched by Lynch-law when their existence had become intolerable. Darnley, in his turn, died for Rizzio; and

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Beton's executioners slept all in bloody graves; while the few who were alive to the shame of Scotland, and struggled for order and justice,—men like the Regent Murray, Lennox, Morton, and Ruthven,—paid for their perilous heroism by assassination or on the scaffold.

And these larger tragedies were but the symbols of the ferocity by which the whole lives of men were saturated. Scott's great scene in the dungeon at Torquilstone was borrowed from the literal history of those frightful years: a wretched churchman was roasted on the bars of his prison fire-place by the Earl of Cassilis, till he signed away his lands. Lady Forbes and all her household were burnt alive by the Gordons in the flames of their own castle. Every town and hamlet, every grange and tower, had its separate tale of horror; and the story of Scotland until James VI. came to man's estate might be written in blood. In the frightful dissolution of social order, even justice could be executed only by formal crime; and, bred in the midst of these convulsions, a king in name, but powerless as a cockboat in a hurricane, the boy grew up the nucleus of every conspiracy, the plaything of a ferocious nobility. Statesmen on whom he could lean, dignified by established authority and length of years, there were none for him. The conception of statesmen, as experience had brought them in contact with himself, was of hard fierce men, alternately cruel tyrants and the victims of rivals like themselves. The guardian of one day passing to the scaffold on the next was the familiar issue of each oscillation of fortune.

This was not a happy training for any man, still less for a man compounded of materials such as those out of which nature had framed James Stuart. In a happier sphere, he might have grown up an innocent and not perhaps a wholly useless person. That, educated as he was, he became nothing worse than England and Scotland knew him to be, may be fairly reckoned to his credit. He could not have been great—the dwarf cannot be cultivated into the giant, or the mule into the war-horse—but his constitution was harmless, and could have been turned to good of a kind; with good fortune he might have made a useful Cathedral-dean or University-professor.

Circumstances, however, were not so kind to him. At the close of the civil wars of 1570-73, when the Reformers were for a time absolute, he was committed—being then six years old—to the care of Buchanan. The choice was not a wise one. Buchanan was an excellent scholar, he had large knowledge of books, and skill in book instruction; but, although his course in public life had been upright and just, he was a passionate polemic. A book in which he had exposed the queen's complicity in her husband's murder was notorious through the world; and the public accuser

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of the mother was ill selected as the guardian of the child. Nor had the prince either friend or relation who could lend to his life any intervals of cheerfulness. His father and his uncle were murdered; Mary was a prisoner in England; and while the Protestants were in power, her name was only mentioned in his hearing coupled with execrations. Affection, in the human sense of the word, there was no human heart to feel for James, or to warm into life any answering emotion in himself: his heart, if he was born with one, soon became dry as the dust.

While Buchanan, again, taught him books and grammar, he had not found it necessary to teach him the use of an authority of which the Protestants intended to leave him but the name. The supremacy in matters temporal of the spiritual power over the secular was held as absolutely by the General Assembly as by Gregory VII.; and James, as a matter of course, being left to form his own notions, arrived at a conclusion exactly the opposite. Hence, as much by their fault as by his own, he grew up in a false relation with the ministers of the Kirk; and when he came to manhood, and was no longer an absolute cipher, we can scarcely wonder that they agreed worse and worse. Of governing Scotland, in the real sense of the word, he was altogether incapable. His occupation soon resolved itself into a foolish and undignified struggle with the Assembly. The ministers did not choose to remember that he was no longer a child. They lectured him in private; they preached at him in their pulpits; the king's manner, the king's actions, the king's words, were the topics of favourite disquisition with which, week after week, the Edinburgh congregations were entertained. James, on the other hand, very naturally hating them, intrigued against their liberties; and in prosecuting his quarrel, made himself as ridiculous and mischievous as themselves. While the country was being wrecked for want of government, the king of it was busying himself in ecclesiastical polemics. As the ministers would erect a counterfeit of the papal theory, so James would have his counterfeit of the opposing theory. He would be the Henry VIII. of Scotland, head of the Kirk, the ass in the lion's skin, the supreme authority in all causes, spiritual and civil, in his dominions.

We might smile at the grotesqueness of the dispute, were it not for the frightful consequences. It is not with impunity, however, that men who are in high place in this world can indulge in these unseemly triflings; and while the king and the clergy were bickering idly for pre-eminence, the crimes, black and horrible,—for the repression of which king and clergy, if they had known it, alike existed,—grew like the weeds in a neglected garden. A few witches and warlocks here and there were "wirried and burnt;" but there was the limit of the executive authority. The retainers

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of the noble houses fought in Edinburgh streets before James's eyes; he looked on in helpless impotence, for what was he to stay them? Twice after he had come to man's estate he was attacked in his own palace to be abducted like a girl. And men whom he denounced as traitors appeared carelessly in their places at the council-board. If he complained, his answer was a smile of insolence.

The state to which the nation was reduced may be seen from the following extracts, taken almost at random from Calderwood:

"James Gray, brother of the master of Gray, ravished a gentlewoman, apparent heir to her father John Carnegie; but was rendered again to her father. She was again ravished by the said James out of Robert Gowsser's house in Edinburgh, where she and her father remained for the time; she was hailled down a close to the North Loche, and conveyed over in a boat. They set her on a man's saddle and conveyed her away, her hair hanging about her face. The Lord Hume keeped the High Street with armed men till the fact was accomplished. Upon Monday, the 11th of June (1593), the provost, enterprising with some bailiffs between ten and eleven at night to apprehend James Henderson who had been at the ravishing, was repulsed. A debosched minister, named Bishop, took the provost by the throat, after he had charged Henderson to ward. The Laird of Hatton withstood that any man should have him—yea, they shot at the provost. The following day the provost went to the king and complained. The king desired to know if they could complain of any that was about him. In the mean time my Lord Hume, the chief author of the riot, was standing by. They answered nothing, because they expected for no justice."

Here, too, is an account of a piteous scene once witnessed in Edinburgh streets:

"In the same year, at afternoon, the 22nd of July, there came certain poor women out of the south country with fifteen bloody shirts, to complain to the king that their husbands, sons, and servants were cruelly murdered in their own houses by the Laird of Johnstone, themselves spoiled, and nothing left them. The poor women, seeing they could not get satisfaction, caused the bloody shirts to be carried by pioneers through the town of Edinburgh. The people were much moved, and cried out for a vengeance against the king and his council."

It was a wild miserable world; but how little the king could do to set it right might have been seen but two days later. We quote the next entry as it stands:

"On Tuesday, the 24th of July, the Earl Bothwell came to the palace of Holyrood House. At the back gate which openeth to the Lady Gowrie's house, as the Lady Athol was coming from the king and queen to her mother to take good night, he rapped rudely at the king's chamber-door, which was opened by the Earl of Athol. The king would have gone to the queen's chamber, but the door was locked; and the Duke (of Lennox), Athol, Ochiltree, Spinie, and Dunipace,

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went between him and the door. The king, seeing no other refuge, asked what they meant? Came they to seek his life? Let them take it: they would not get his soul. Bothwell, sitting upon his knees, and M'Colville with him, said he sought not his life, but came to seek his highness's pardon for the raid of the Abbey, and the raid of Falkland —(attempts which he had previously made to seize or kill James)— offering to thole an assize for witchcraft, and for seeking the king's life; upon these and such other conditions they agreed, and his majesty pardoned him all bygans."

The royal robes must have been a bitter livery when the wearer of them was exposed to treatment such as this. James's peculiar gifts, his combined vanity and imbecility, may have protected him from the full consciousness of his humiliation; yet a school more unfitted for the cultivation of any kind of virtue, kingly or other, it is hard to conceive. It is to be remembered, too, that as no act of his own gave him the crown, so he was not at liberty to lay it aside. Unfitted by nature to govern an ordinary household, he was compelled, whether he would or no, to govern a kingdom—or to seem to govern it—at all events to maintain himself in his outward position. If he could have thrown himself, when he made the discovery of his weakness, on the people and on the Reformation—if he had sought help from Elizabeth and called to his counsels the few nobles who were inclined to the English alliance, his difficulties would in great measure have given way; and if he had escaped assassination, his course might have been easy. Such conduct, however, required a courage which had not been given to him, and qualities which no other Scotchman of his day possessed. The Reformers had taught him to hate them; he naturally looked for his friends among his mother's supporters; and all around him moving in crooked courses, it is little wonder that he followed with the stream, and took his mould from the influences which bore upon him.

When he was twenty-three years old he married; and at the birth of his first child there was some short-lived national enthusiasm. The agitations for a time subsided, and there was a respite from the worst disorders. The interval of repose, however, was soon over; and, whether justly or not, the queen herself furnished a fresh occasion for intrigues. It is necessary to speak of these things, because, to understand the conduct of any man, we must see as clearly as possible the circumstances which surrounded him; we cannot interpret conduct without a clue to the motives, actual or likely, which lead to it; and motives which, in certain conditions of things, are incomprehensible and impossible, in others become intelligible and natural. Anne of Denmark brought with her into Scotland the habits which were usual on the Continent among ladies of rank. She was fond of amusement, fond

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of splendour and society; and she was transferred into a scene, where, in the eyes of the ministers,—the rugged guardians of morality,—a gay dress was the livery of sin, and a ball or a masque a service in Satan's temple. No public scandal has fastened on her memory; there is no admissible evidence that her conduct was ever really censurable. But the reformed clergy were haunted by the recollection of the luxurious and splendid wickedness of Mary; and the most innocent gaiety threatened a similar career. In every courtier on whom the queen smiled, they discovered a second Rizzio or Bothwell. The queen's conduct was discussed in the General Assembly, and resolutions were taken interfering with her household and her friends. Pressing their intrusion further, the divines even presumed to remonstrate, "as touching her company, her not repairing to the word and sacraments, her nightwalking and balling."* If their jealousy was occasioned by an earnest anxiety for the public good, it may be excused and even admired. It may be, however, that the Edinburgh ministers were not so disinterested; and that the reflections on the queen were but a part of the petty war between the king and themselves. Scandal, however, never found a public unwilling to listen to it. It is certain that whether their suspicions were just or unjust, the public expression of them soon produced the most painful effect. Even James himself, while deaf to the Kirk on subjects when it could have guided him wisely, opened his ears wide when it would have been well if they had remained closed. A shadow fell over Anne. Prince Henry, not long after his birth, was removed from her care. She was only allowed to see him in the presence of his keepers; and with James's consent, if not by his directions, she was herself the object of surveillance. Nor was this the worst. Slander is never contented to remain indefinite; and if the popular poetry of the time may be trusted, the name of more than one nobleman was mixed with hers, and one tragedy at least, if not a second, revenged her supposed unfaithfulness.

Readers of the Scotch ballads need hardly be reminded of the bonny Earl of Murray, whose fate is the subject of one of the most beautiful of them.

"Ye highlands and ye lawlands,
Oh! quhair hae ye been?
They hae slaine the Earle of Murray,
And hae laid him on the green.

Now wae be to thee, Huntley!
And quhairfore did ye sae?
I bade you bring him wi' you,
But forbade you him to slay.

* Calderwood, vol. v. p. 409.

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He was a braw gallant,
And he rid at the ring;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
Oh! he might hae been a king.

He was a braw gallant,
And he played at the glove;
And the bonny Earl of Murray,
Oh! he was the queene's luve."

The last line is no enigmatical interpretation of Murray's murder. The story has a wild and terrible grandeur about it; and is too curious a parallel to the Gowrie mystery to be passed by without some notice. The "bonny earl" was nephew of the regent, whose estates he inherited as well as his name and popularity. Whether there was cause for the king's jealousy of him we can now only guess; but as he was said to be the most beautiful person in Scotland, and James's bodily attractions were small, perhaps the consciousness of his defects made the husband credulous. At any rate he supposed himself to have been injured; and, under pretence that Murray was a partisan of Bothwell, he directed Lord Huntley, the earl's hereditary enemy, to seize him.

Murray was staying with his mother, the Lady of Down, at the house of Dinny Bryssell, in Fife. The Gordons, with Huntley at their head, drew round the walls in the dead of a winter's night. They fired the outhouses, the granaries, and at last the doors, and they watched by the light of the flames to prevent the escape of their victim. Murray sprang out. He was a very active man, and contrived to evade or break their line. In another moment he would have been lost in the darkness. By his evil fortune, however, a spark had caught his dress; it blazed up; he was discovered, and was shot down as he ran. The Gordons having done their work, withdrew before daybreak. One of them, who was supposed to have been killed in the confusion, was left on the ground wounded. In the morning two litters were prepared. In one was placed the body of the earl; in another, the wounded Gordon. The picture of Murray had been made roughly on canvas, as he lay scorched and bleeding upon the grass; and the Lady of Down led the mourning procession into Edinburgh, bearing the painting like a banner in her hand. Two balls had been found in her son's wounds: one she sent in piteous protest to James; the other, she said, "she reserved for herself, to be bestowed on him that hindereth justice." The effect of such a spectacle may be imagined. The people rose in fury, heaping execrations on James's head. He issued a hurried proclamation declaring his innocence, but without effect in allaying the tumult. The Gordon was put to death at the market-cross; and in the first burst

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of the storm it might have gone hard with the king himself, had he not escaped out of the town. He wrote afterwards to Huntley to say that "he had never been in such peril and danger of his life since he was born." Popular explosions, however, where created by a single event, are soon over; if their work can be done on the instant, it may be done well and efficiently; if the opportunity is lost, the force of the movement is exhausted. From beyond the walls of the city, James could temporise in safety. Huntley consented to a collusive imprisonment, and a public trial was promised; and the lords gained time to assemble in sufficient strength to shield the murderer, whose punishment would be too dangerous a precedent. In a month all was over and forgotten; and the Lady of Down, in passionate despair of justice, broke her heart and died for sorrow, leaving only with her last breath a mother's malediction to the king.

Something will now be understood of the condition of Scotland at the close of the sixteenth century. It was a condition in which no act of violence need appear surprising; in which there was no law, nor even any general conception of justice; where each separate person was the defender of his own rights and his own honour, and measured what was due to him only by the rule of his passions. King and subject were so far on a common level; for, if the king was injured, he had no remedy but private revenge. King might plot against subject, or subject against king; and deprived of the guidance of settled habits and settled convictions, men naturally neither violent nor vicious might lend themselves to actions which were both. In the discussions of historians on the tragedy which we are about to examine, much has been said on either side of the unlikelihood of the crime as a crime. But the unlikelihood amounts to nothing appreciable. James was not a bad man, but he lent himself to Murray's murder; and with the same provocation might have consented to the murder of Gowrie. Gowrie may have had all the virtues which the Protestants claimed for him; but the very virtues of the Ruthven family had shown themselves chiefly in acts which were formally treason.

We must clear our minds, then, of all preconceived probabilities, and form our conclusions merely upon the evidence. It is worth while to take some trouble with it; for James, if nothing better, was a king of England, and his doings, good or evil, will be discussed and written of while the history of England continues to be of interest. To proceed, then.

The Ruthvens of Perth had from the beginning been consistent supporters of the Scotch Reformation. The old earl, whose name is so familiar to students of Mary Stuart's history, was the first noble who recognised John Knox, and who dared to cross

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the path of Mary of Guise. In the insurrection of 1558, which overthrew the old establishment, Ruthven was foremost; and afterwards, as the friend of Murray, he laboured like a loyal gentleman to keep his daughter out of the evil ways into which she was plunging. Mary's bad genius, however, was too strong for Ruthven's counsel. When he found that he could do nothing, he withdrew from the court, and left her to go her course to its proper ending. His health broke up in his retirement. He lived long enough, however, to bear a part in the punishment of Rizzio, rising from a sick bed to assist in the execution; and it was to him that Lord Bedford was indebted for the account contained in the warden's despatches, of the scene in the queen's room at Holyrood, which removes the last doubt that charity might have laboured to entertain of the nature of her connection with the favourite. Two months later, Ruthven died. He was succeeded in his title by his son; and the young lord, who inherited his father's character and policy, after Mary's exile, when the Protestant party was again in the ascendant, became also Earl of Gowrie.

This Gowrie, or Ruthven, was the hero of the famous *raid;* an achievement in its time of considerable moment,—another of those rough measures of justice which the sickness of the age made necessary. He was nearly connected with the crown, having married Dorothea Stuart, half-sister (it would seem) to Darnley,* and therefore aunt of the king. And when the unwise James had bestowed his affections on French Catholic favourites, who were occupying themselves in cutting off honest men's heads and debauching their neighbours' wives, Ruthven, using the privilege of an uncle, took possession of his nephew's person, and confined him for a while in better company. The earl did good service to his country: for himself, however, he found his natural reward. The authority of a strong just man threatened to put a period to anarchy; and the nobles combined to protect their liberties. Although hating one another, they could unite in a greater common hatred of any thing good. Another revolution soon followed. The raid was discovered to have been high treason; and, in 1584, Ruthven's head fell at Stirling.

It is due to James to say, that he was not himself responsible for this piece of wickedness; he was but a plaything in the hands of the fierce bad men who surrounded him, and was in age but a

* Dorothea Stuart was daughter of Lord Methuen, who married Margaret, queen-dowager of Scotland and sister of Henry VIII., after her divorce from her second husband, the Earl of Angus. But whether Dorothea was the child of this marriage is uncertain. The ease and frequency of divorces—another frightful evil of the social system of the time—renders the pedigrees of the great families extremely intricate.

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boy at the time. He seems to have honestly regretted what he was unable to prevent; and, though he could have had no particular regard for his kinsman, as soon as he came of age and could consult his own feelings, he proved his sorrow by annulling the attainder of the family, and restoring to the countess and his cousin their rank and estates.

Nor did his good-will confine itself to an act of mere justice. The earl had left behind him six children at least—two daughters and four sons. The eldest girl was given in marriage to the Duke of Lennox, the first nobleman in Scotland. Beatrice, the next, was attached to the court, and was lady-in-waiting to the queen; a house was assigned to their mother, adjoining the palace at Holyrood; and Alexander, the second son, grew up in James's suite, and was his intimate companion. These things are of great importance, as showing the relation which existed between the Ruthvens and the king. It seems, at the outset at least, as if the only desire was to bury all painful recollections in kindness.

The young Earl Gowrie, about the year 1594, went abroad to be educated. He was for five years at the University of Padua; where, in compliment perhaps to his rank, he was nominated lord rector. It is, however, certain that, in mind and character, he was no ordinary person. At a time when many of the lords who sate in the estates at Edinburgh could scarcely write their names, Gowrie studied Greek and Hebrew; and, fatally for his reputation, he had mastered a few secrets of physical science, as it was then taught at Padua, which on his return brought him the name of a necromancer. In religion, like his father and grandfather, he seems to have been a Calvinist. At Geneva he became an intimate friend of Theodore Beza, who remembered him with peculiar affection; and his political sympathies being also those of his family, he inclined to England and the English alliance as the best support of his country. Abroad he courted the acquaintance of English noblemen; the house of Sir Henry Neville, Elizabeth's ambassador, was his home at Paris; and when the time came for his return to Scotland, he went through London on his way, where he was received with especial honour by the queen.

His reputation preceded him; and the appearance in public life of the chief of the Ruthven family was necessarily an event of great importance. During his absence, the French and Spanish faction had been supreme in James's council; the Protestants had become gradually weaker; and a concealed but active correspondence had been carried on between the king and the court of Rome. The parties, however, were nearly equally balanced; and the arrival of Gowrie, whose principles were so well

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known, was anxiously expected with violently opposite feelings. The jealousy of James is said to have been excited by the treatment which he had received from Elizabeth. This circumstance is more probable in itself than attested by evidence. It is certain, however, that when he crossed the border, he was already feared and hated by a faction who had strong influence over James's mind; and, perhaps unhappily for him, the Protestants made his return the occasion of a popular demonstration. It was in February A.D. 1600 that Gowrie entered Edinburgh. "He raid up the calsey with a great company of his friends," the hero of the party with whom the king was in perpetual feud; and the old dread and panic at the Ruthven name which had slept for so many years woke again when James heard of it. With an unfeeling bitterness, which was bitterly remembered against him, he was heard to mutter, "There were more with his father when he was conveyed to the scaffold;" and he seems to have eyed Gowrie as Saul eyed David.

It soon appeared, too, that the earl was his father's son, and was a true Ruthven at heart. In March there was a convention of the estates; the king having occasion for money, some iniquitous taxing scheme was proposed; and Gowrie opened his political life with opposing the court, and opposing it successfully. The scheme failed: the king's purse remained empty; and his temper was not improved towards the cause. The young patriot had made himself obnoxious; and his probable fate was foreseen and foretold. While they were still in council, Sir David Murray pointed to him where he sat: "Yonder," said he, "is an unhappy man; they are but seeking occasion of his death, which now he has given."* There must have been some cause for so remarkable a prophecy beyond a single act of political opposition. The absence of facts, however, may not be supplied by guesses. We must confine ourselves to what we actually know.

But although Gowrie had openly joined the opposition, there was no open rupture with the court; and he continued through the spring on apparently friendly terms with the king. He was frequently at Holyrood. We hear of the king conversing freely with him on questions of science, and writing frequently to him when absent. Nor, again, on his part are there any symptoms of manœuvring, or any signs of a desire to interfere with the court, except in the discharge of his immediate duty in the council. In personal disposition he was reserved, retiring, and unambitious. At the beginning of the summer he settled in his house at Perth, of which the earls of Ruthven were hereditary provosts.

* Calderwood, vol. vi. This seems an ascertained fact.

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We hear of him being active as a magistrate, and by and by as making preparation for his marriage. So far as we can see with our meagre knowledge, nothing could have been further from his thoughts than conspiracy, as nothing could have been more useless. At no time in James's reign would a conspiracy against him have been less likely to succeed; or, if successful, have promised so little to the cause which Gowrie most regarded.

Such, then, being the general position of the Ruthven toward the king, we pass on to the eventful Tuesday the 5th of August, in this same year 1600; and James, who from the commencement of the story is the chief or rather the only witness, shall tell it his own way.

At the end of July the court had removed to Falkland for the hunting season. The sportsmen in those days were early in the field; and James was mounting his horse between six and seven in the morning, when Alexander Ruthven, dusty from a hurried journey, came suddenly up to him and begged a private audience. The king went aside with him; and Ruthven, with a mysterious manner, declared that on the preceding evening he had been walking near Perth, when he had met a suspicious-looking stranger wandering with no apparent purpose about the fields. He questioned him, he said, as to who and what he was; and finding his answers unsatisfactory, and observing that he was carrying something concealed in his dress, threw back the folds of the man's cloak, and found under his arm "a great wide pot all full of coined gold in great pieces." No account could be given of the gold further than that the stranger said he was looking for a place where he could bury it. Ruthven therefore at once arrested him, took him into the town, locked him carefully up in "a darned outhouse" with his treasure, and without informing his brother or any other person of the capture, had ridden off upon the spot to inform his majesty.

This, it is to be remembered, is the account which was given afterwards by the king; we have no means of checking it; and the only ascertained fact is that Ruthven appeared in the courtyard at Falkland. No stranger had been really found, and no treasure; and the rest of his story either was a lie on the part of Ruthven, or else was invented by the king to conceal something which he did not care to expose. Reserving our opinion for the present, we proceed. James said that he thought the matter "very strange." It occurred to him that the stranger might be a Jesuit, and that the gold might be some private supply sent from Spain to feed a popish conspiracy. Large sums of money had before found their way into the realm from that quarter in a strange manner, and the suspicion was not an unnatural one. It is remarkable only that James was himself at that very mo-

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ment engaged in a correspondence with the Pope; and that at no other time, at any rate, had he discovered particular zeal in detecting Jesuits, while his story, as it appeared in English,* was addressed to his Protestant subjects to appease their suspicious irritation. Whatever he thought, however, or professed to have thought, he thanked Ruthven, as he said, for his zeal, and proposed that he should send a warrant to the provost of Perth (the Earl of Gowrie) to examine the man and take charge of the money; when a report was returned, he said, he would consider further. To this Ruthven made strong objection. He said, that if his brother had possession of the money, his majesty would receive but a bad account of it; and he pressed the king to return with him to Perth, and see the stranger himself. The distance was something under twenty miles; they could be on the spot in two hours at the furthest. "His brother and all the town would be at sermon;" and "his majesty might take what secret order he pleased before they came out of church;" while, if they delayed too long, *the man might cry out;* some one would hear him, and the money would be lost. The king was at a loss what to do. His coffers, as we have seen, were not well supplied, partly through Gowrie's means; and "a pot of gold" had a tempting sound. On the other hand, the story was a wild one; and for a moment he thought that Ruthven might be out of his mind. Meanwhile the dogs had gone forward; the horns were blowing; the stag was found; and he would see the hunt out at any rate. He galloped off, still thinking of what he had heard; and shortly after he sent back a page to desire Ruthven to follow him, with a message, that when the sport was over, he would do as he had desired.

The hunt lasted long, Mr. Alexander being "much impatient" the while, and at every pause or check riding up and "rounding in the king's ear that he should make haste." At length, about eleven o'clock, the stag was killed. James turned

* A Latin version was published, in which, it was observed, the passage alluding to the Jesuits was omitted,—an unfortunate circumstance, which brought the king into still deeper discredit. It might be, as the acute ministers at Edinburgh observed, "that the Papists" would then have "said it was a lee." And if Catholics and Protestants united in their incredulity, it might have been awkward. Further suspicion falls on James from an attempt which he made to fasten on the Ruthvens a charge of Romanising. Patrick Galloway, the king's preacher, was instructed to say of Gowrie, that "without the country he haunted with the Papists, yea, with the Pope himself: with whom he had not conference only, but farther has made covenants and bands with him, as appears very well; for since his home-coming he has travelled most earnestly with the king; and his majesty has received from him the hardest assault that ever he did to revolt from religion,—at least in inward sincerity, to entertain purpose with the Pope." *Calderwood*, vi. 52. So transparent a slander obtained the credit which it deserved; and where so large a lie was thought necessary, it was felt the more confidently that there was something ugly behind it.

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to his train, telling them he was going to Perth to speak to the Earl of Gowrie, and that he would return before the evening. He gave no directions for any one to accompany him; and leaving the courtiers to follow or not as they pleased, he started with Ruthven. Lord Mar, the Duke of Lennox, Sir Thomas Erskine, and a few other noblemen whose grooms were in the field with fresh horses, mounted with the best speed they could make and rode after. The rest, being unprovided, were obliged to return to Falkland.* It seems that Ruthven hoped to have taken the king with him alone. When Mar and the others came up, he urged that they should go back, and "so vehemently" that the king began to suspect mischief; he rode aside with Lennox, and told him the story; and although he still resolved to go forward, he desired Lennox "not to fail to accompany him to the house where the alleged fellow and treasure was."† They then rode rapidly on; James's mind, he said, misgiving him, yet unable to come to any sure conclusion. One moment he doubted Ruthven's loyalty, and the next he "was ashamed of" his doubt; and so, "between trust and distrust," he found himself two miles from Perth.

Here a messenger was pushed forward to announce that the king was coming, and to prepare the earl for his royal visitor. It was now one o'clock. Lord Gowrie, on the messenger's arrival, was sitting alone at dinner; and if he was not taken by surprise, he acted his part to perfection. He rose in haste from the table, and calling his people out of the hall (there were about eighty of them altogether), he hurried down to meet the king on the meadow beyond the gates. He escorted him to his house, making apologies for the indifferent entertainment which on the moment he should be able to offer. Dinner, however, should be ready as soon as possible; and he hoped to be forgiven if any thing was deficient, on the ground of want of preparation. They dismounted; and as there was some delay before dinner appeared, the king whispered to Alexander Ruthven that now was the time to inspect the stranger and his treasure. Ruthven, who had before been so anxious that time should not be lost, replied, he said, to the king's surprise, that "there was no hurry," "his majesty might dine at leisure," "praying his majesty to leave him, and

* This is important; and being an ascertained fact, and not resting on James's authority, it disposes conclusively of the suspicion of intended foul play on the part of the court against the Ruthvens. If there had been any prearranged scheme to turn a hunting-party into a body of conspirators, the precaution would have been surely taken to furnish a sufficient number of the king's train with fresh horses. Of the noblemen who actually accompanied him, two at least were near connections of the Ruthven family: Lord Mar was the earl's godfather, and the Duke of Lennox was his brother-in-law.

† This is important, as will be presently seen.

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not to be seen to round with him before his brother, who, having missed him that morning, might suspect what the matter could mean."* The earl meanwhile was anxious and disturbed. There was a visible embarrassment in his manner; but it was no more than might be explained by the sudden visitation, which, especially if there had been any coldness between himself and the king, may have been easily unwelcome.†

An hour passed away. At length dinner was ready. A separate cover was placed for the king in the earl's sitting-room. The rest of the party were taken to the great table in the hall. According to the etiquette of the time, the host ought to have remained with the latter to entertain them. It was observed that he left them to themselves, and returned, after seeing them seated, to wait upon the king. He hung about the room in a constrained uneasy manner; and at length James, who was anxious to be left to himself, that he might set out on his adventure with young Ruthven, rallied him on his ignorance of Scotch manners, and, "in a merry, homely manner," dismissed him to his company.

Gowrie went. According to James's story, although the two brothers had been alone with him in a private room, nothing had passed of an unusual kind. There had been no dispute, no irritating questions. If they had chosen to seize him, he was then at their mercy. His train was separated from him, and at most did not amount to more than fourteen persons; Gowrie's own household servants would have sufficed to arrest the whole of them, unsuspecting and unarmed. However, as we said, the earl left the apartment; James and Ruthven rose immediately; and we must now observe particularly the king's account. The difficulty of the story lies in the mysterious suddenness with which the catastrophe broke.

Ruthven, he said, first led him across the bottom of the hall where his party were at dinner. He thus gave him an opportunity of directing any of the noblemen to accompany him, if he had desired to do so; and it is evident that James did nothing of the kind. He had previously said that the Duke of Lennox should go with him; and as Lennox must have seen him cross the hall, some intimation must have been given that his presence would not be required. They then passed up a staircase, at the head of which was a double door; Ruthven locked it behind them, and thence they went on through a suite of apartments, into a small room six feet in diameter, which was called "the study." Being so small, and there being another door in the opposite side, this must have been a sort of passage-room. Possibly, how-

* King's declaration. Calderwood, vi. 35.

† "A cold welcome—a very cold welcome." Calderwood.

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ever, it was used by Gowrie for scientific or other similar purposes. Here, as they came in, James said that he saw before him, not a bound man, but a freeman with a very abashed countenance, and a dagger at his girdle. He was stammering out an inquiry whether this was the stranger whom they had come to see, when Ruthven for answer locked the door by which they had entered; and then, with an instant change in his manner, thrust on his bonnet, and snatching the dagger from the man's belt, he held the point of it at the king's breast, "bidding him remember his father's murder, and swearing that if he cried out he should die."

James is said to have been a coward, although on trying occasions he exhibited rather helplessness than fear, and his hard riding seems incompatible with a positive absence of courage. However this may be, if he is to be trusted, he did not on the present occasion lose his presence of mind; he collected himself as well as the suddenness of the attack would allow him. He was unarmed, and had no defence but his eloquence, which, however, he summoned to his help. He poured out an excellent discourse on the impropriety of making away with kings; he reminded Ruthven (so he assured his Protestant subjects) of the lessons which he had received from that worthy man Mr. Robert Rollock, the minister at Edinburgh, and of the kindnesses he had himself shown the Gowrie family. He declared justly that he was a boy at the time of the late earl's death, and could not be held responsible for it; and finally he promised, on the word of a prince, that if Ruthven would spare his life, he would never mention what had passed to any human being.

The strange man meanwhile never had offered to move, but "stood trembling and shaking more like a condemned man than the executioner of such an enterprise." He had cried out, nevertheless, when Ruthven first caught the dagger, "with trembling attestations, exclaiming against the meddling with his majesty;" and Ruthven, between the helplessness of his follower and the power of the king's oratory, appeared for the moment to be moved. He took off his bonnet, and in a more respectful tone said that the king had nothing to fear. If he would be quiet and make no noise, his life should be safe. He would go himself and fetch his brother the earl. With these words he left the room; first, however, exacting an oath that the king should remain silent, and that he should not open the window which looked into the street; and at the same time telling the man that he left his majesty in his hands, and that he should be responsible for his prisoner with his life.

The king was then alone with his strange companion, to whom he appealed for an explanation of the scene. What was intended

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with him, he asked. Did the Earl of Gowrie mean to kill him? The man, with "a trembling and astonished voice," declared that he knew as little as his majesty. As God should judge him, he was ignorant of any conspiracy; and that he had been locked in the room, he knew not for what cause, but a few minutes before his majesty entered.

James bade him open the window, having, as he said, given his word that he would not open it himself,—a piece of helpless sophistry, introduced, we may suppose, into the narrative like the story of the Jesuit, to please the precisians of the Kirk. It will be seen that there are many ascertainable inaccuracies throughout the whole account of the scene in the closet. Presently there were steps again upon the stairs, the door was thrown open, and Ruthven came passionately back, with a pair of garters in his hand, declaring there was no remedy, and that the king must die. He offered to twist the garters about James's hands. James cried out that he would not be bound; if he was to die, he would die a free man, and began to struggle. Ruthven tried to draw his sword.* The king caught him by the throat with one hand, and caught the sheath of the sword in the other. They were close to the window, and while Ruthven tried to silence him by thrusting his fingers into his mouth, he was able to stutter loud enough to make himself heard in the street.

Such are the facts as James related them. We must now return for a few moments to the hall. It would throw considerable light upon the greatest difficulties of the case, if we knew how long an interval elapsed between the time when the king went up the stairs with Ruthven till the cry at the window. He could not have been many minutes in the study; and we should desire to know whether any period remains unaccounted for, when something else, which James did not care to acknowledge, may have taken place in the gallery. The king's train, at all events, had finished their dinner, and were rising from the table, when a servant came hastily in, and said that the king had mounted his horse, and had ridden off across the meadow. They all hurried out, Gowrie being himself with them. The hall-door led into a quadrangle, from which a gate opened into the street. The party hastened to the porter's lodge, where they were told that it was a mistake. The king was still in the house; or if he had left it, it was not through the gate. Gowrie said that he believed the porter "leed." He would see instantly, however, what was the truth, and disappeared up a staircase. In a few moments he returned saying that the king had gone out by a postern, and that they must mount at once and overtake him. They passed

* It was found afterwards *rusted into the scabbard* so tightly that two men could not draw it.

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out into the street, calling loudly for their horses. At that moment the window above their heads was flung open; a voice was heard crying to the Earl of Mar for help, and looking up they saw Ruthven and the king in the act of struggling.

Sir Thomas Erskine, who was standing next to the Earl of Gowrie, caught him by the gorget, exclaiming, "Thou art the traitor!" and flung him on the ground. One of the Ruthvens, in return, felled Erskine with "a buffet;" and all the party then scattered in search of some means of access to the room where the king was crying. Lord Mar and the Duke of Lennox tried the stairs by which he had gone up from the hall, but they were stopped by the locked doors, and were obliged to wait for axes and hammers before they could force their way. Sir John Ramsay, "a page," by accident, discovered the back staircase which formed the other approach. It was open; and he ran up, followed, at a short interval, by Sir Thomas Erskine and Sir Hugh Herries. Ramsay, when he came upon the scene, found the king, who was a weaker and smaller man than Ruthven, just on the point of winning the victory for himself. He had got his assailant's head under his arm, and was in the act of thrusting him out of the door. In such a situation it would have been easy to secure Ruthven, unarmed as he was, for his sword was still in the scabbard, and he had no other weapon. Perhaps, however, this would have required greater coolness than could fairly have been looked for. The king cried to the page to strike him under the doublet, and kept his hold till Ramsay had stabbed him twice. They then together thrust the wounded man down the steps, where he was found immediately after by Erskine and Herries. They at least might have taken him prisoner without difficulty; but either they forgot it, or they remembered that dead men tell no tales. They despatched him with their swords; and the only words which he was heard to utter were, "*Alas, I had not the wit of it!*" *

By this time Gowrie himself had reached the staircase; he had gone, it would seem, for arms, and now came up with a sword in each hand, attended by one companion; two others remaining below.† He must have passed his brother's body on the steps; but he ran on, and as he appeared, the king was thrust back into the room and the door was shut. If Gowrie had meditated foul play, he was a blundering traitor. Erskine said to him, "You have killed the king our master; and will you also

* Spotswood, who heard the story two days after from the minister at Perth, says that the words were, "I take God to witness I was not to blame."

† Spotswood, Calderwood. James said that seven or eight came up with the earl; but they were like Falstaff's men in buckram. His terror multiplied the number. This is the most audacious falsehood which we can *detect* in his story.

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take our lives?" "The king killed!" Gowrie could only exclaim. The points of his swords were dropped to the ground; he stood overwhelmed as it seemed with horror; and while in this position, Ramsay stole behind him, and stabbed him through the back.*

Gowrie fell, and died without a word. Almost at the same instant Mar and the Duke of Lennox came in on the other side, having broken their way through the door at the head of the staircase. All was over before they arrived; and James, as they joined him, with an earnestness which it is impossible to believe wholly counterfeited, fell on his knees in the midst of the group to offer thanks for his escape. "His majesty," they said, "out of his own mouth did then thank God of that miraculous deliverance and victory; assuring himself that God had preserved him out of so desperate a peril for the perfecting of some greater work behind, and for the procuring by him the weale of his people."

He was still, nevertheless, in great danger. His little party was surrounded by the exasperated household, who were swarming in the quadrangle. Gowrie had disappeared; nothing certain was known of his fate; and the news of the confusion spread like wildfire into the town, where he was warmly beloved. The mob, with the retainers of Ruthven, beset the doors, crying, that they would have the earl, or the king's green coats should pay for it; and words were heard ringing up the staircase which must have made James quake from rage and terror. "Come down," cried Ruthven of Foregun; "come down, thou son of Signor Davie; thou hast slain an honester man than thyself." At length the bailiffs, with the town-watch, appeared on the scene, and restored some kind of order. They made their way through the crowd, and after a parley were admitted into the room, where the king's story was told to them. The presence of Lennox and Mar gave a weight to his words which his own unkingly carriage would less easily have obtained. Satisfied at least, if not of the earl's guilt, yet of the obvious improbability that James, with a small unarmed train, could have come to Perth with the deliberate intention of committing a crime, they undertook to pacify the people and secure his escape. There was nothing else to be done. If the earl's people had killed the whole party before they arrived, perhaps no great regret would have been felt for them; but it was obviously impossible for the magistrates of a provincial town to consent to the arrest of their sovereign. They descended into the quadrangle, and persuaded

* Spotswood. The archbishop's evidence is unexceptionable on this point, for he takes James's side. And yet, in the proclamation, the court dared to pretend that there had been a desperate battle, and that the king's party were all wounded.

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the crowd to disperse; and late in the evening the king made his way out of the place, and returned to Falkland.

The mysterious tragedy was concluded, whatever was the true cause of it. The two Ruthvens were dead, who alone possessed the clue to the mystery; and James was the only living person who could tell whether any secret lay behind which he had not revealed, or whether he had related faithfully what had befallen himself. Doubtless he would have been glad to leave the matter where it lay, and stir no further in it. But this was impossible. For the second time within a few years a popular nobleman had been brought to a violent end by the king's fault or misfortune; and the position and character of the Earl of Gowrie made a public explanation indispensable. Some version of what had taken place must be laid before the nation which they could accept, or at least profess to accept; or the crown which James wore, and still more the crown which he hoped to wear, might be in peril.

The next morning, therefore, before or after the day's hunting (for it is noticeable that, notwithstanding his supposed miraculous deliverance, for which Scotland was to go upon its knees, his amusements went on as usual),* an official narrative was drawn up, when the story was told as it has been here related, and submitted to the ministers at Edinburgh. The ignominious reception of it we already know, and it is not easy to blame the general unbelief. Truthfulness, as was well known, was not a virtue for which James was distinguished; and looked at merely in itself, irrespective of other evidence, the account seemed utterly wild, incoherent, and incredible. The fact of the death of the Ruthvens seemed to be the only fact which was certain. The best evidence in favour of the rest was, that if James had been driven into invention, he would have put together something more plausible. The ministers may have been inclined to judge him hardly, but even the most moderate persons felt uncertain; and the more the story was scrutinised, the more serious appeared its flaws. The variations in the Latin and English versions, the attempts to fasten upon the Protestant Gowrie a charge of secret dealing with the Pope, were uselessly impudent; and when it became known that, instead of the seven or eight ruffians who were said to have assisted the earl in his attack on the king, he had been attended by but one man, and had been stabbed unresistingly behind his back, so grave a falsehood compelled the worst suspicions.

Calderwood has preserved the expressions of feeling which were generally current; and the objections, it must be allowed, seem fatal to James's credit.

* Calderwood, vi. p. 49.

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Gowrie was a nobleman of stainless character. How was it to be supposed, men asked, that he would have inveigled the king to his house with an intention of killing or imprisoning him, when he had nothing to gain by his crime, and he would be held instantly and inevitably accountable?

The story of the pot of gold was strange and improbable. It was childish to believe that a sane man would have tempted the king with such a bait, or that James could have been caught by it.

Young Ruthven had urged as a reason for haste that his prisoner might cry out and make a noise. Surely any common person would have thought that he might have cried out already. He had been taken the evening before: and Ruthven had been all night and the morning after absent. Unless some better security had been taken for his keeping, it was a fool's errand to ride twenty miles the middle of the next day in the hope of finding him safe.

The king said he thought Ruthven might perhaps be mad, or might be meditating treason. If he had suspicions of this kind, why did he venture to go alone with him into the gallery without calling Lennox, or at least some servant, to attend him, as he passed through the hall?

Still more, how could Ruthven have calculated beforehand on such an extent of foolishness? And James, in his explanation, embarrassed this portion of his case still more deeply. When the accusations were retorted on himself, when he, and not the Earl of Gowrie, was called the chief conspirator, he declared that he had no need to have hazarded his person in that way in order to punish the Ruthvens. "He had cause enough to have taken their lives, if he had pleased."* If the two brothers were already so deep in treason as to have forfeited their lives, and James knew it, who could believe that he would have been tempted by a report of a pot of gold to trust himself in their power?

The strange helpless man in the study too, who and what was he? Why was he not produced? He had been placed there, it seemed, with no word of instruction what he was to do, or what was expected of him. If an accomplice had been wanted for the murder, would not some one have been selected who had been prepared for his work beforehand? If Ruthven was to have done the deed himself, would he have placed a witness on the very spot where it was to be perpetrated? The supposition was absurd.

Ruthven was unarmed. His sword was at his belt, but it could not be drawn for rust. Was this like a preparation for assassination?

* Calderwood, vi. p. 85.

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And again: "it was thought a foolish thing in Mr. Alexander, and unlikely, to hold a dagger to the king's breast, and then to stand upon parley."

How, after his first menace, could Mr. Alexander have gone out, leaving the king with a man who, it was clear by that time, would give no help,—taking a promise from the king that he would not open the window, or call out?

When he came back again, and said that he must kill him, would he have waited to tie his hands with a garter? A charge with so many improbabilities would have been laughed out of any court of justice in the kingdom.

Why, it was asked, was Alexander Ruthven killed? They had closed the lips which alone could confute the king's story; and with his last breath he had declared his innocence.

The cry was, therefore, for the only other witness,—the man in the study. If any such man had existed at all (which was generally doubted), he could be found somewhere. Let him be brought forward. The king could give no description of him, except that he was "a black grim man." He had not asked him his name. The fellow had slipped away, it was said, when Sir John Ramsay came up the stairs; and yet Erskine and Herries, who were immediately behind, had seen nothing of him. He had disappeared like a wraith,—a creation of James's terror, or perhaps invention.

Public opinion had pronounced so decidedly against the court that they found it essential somehow to produce this man,—the real man, if possible; if not possible, then some one who could pass for the real man, for produced he must be. He was indispensable to their case. They mismanaged the matter miserably; for although, as we believe, there was a man, and he was at last discovered, in their eagerness or their carelessness they had blundered first on so many counterfeits that the truth became only a fresh falsehood. First one man was produced, and then another; but the evidence in each case broke down. After two failures, it was asserted positively that the guilty person was a certain Harry Younger, a servant of the earl. This again was a mistake; but the suspicion cost the poor man his life. On the day in question Younger had been at Dundee, and not at Perth at all; and he was on his way to the court to protest his innocence when he was met by a party of troopers. They chased him, and he tried to hide himself among some cornsheaves; but he was discovered, and killed, and carried in triumph to Falkland. The body was exhibited in the market-place; a sermon was preached over it; and congratulations were offered to James "that the man was gotten at last, though he could not be gotten alive."

The following day this piece of careless needless cruelty was

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exposed, and the odium was of course increased. Failing to find the man they wanted, the court arrested Mr. Rind, the Earl of Gowrie's tutor, hoping to extort some confession which might assist them. The ordinary examination producing nothing, they put him in "the boots," and in this way crushed out some foolish stories of the earl's supposed witchcraft and diabolical acts. They extracted nothing, however, to throw light on the treason, and were at a loss what to do: when it was announced that the search was successful at last; that the man so much in question was Andrew Henderson, the earl's chamberlain. The new discovery met with little acceptance; it was believed only that the imposture this time was more skilfully managed; yet it is most likely that the incredulity was here overshooting itself; that there really was a man in the situation which James described, and that it really was Henderson. James had indeed declared that the person whom he had seen was black and grim, whilst Henderson was small and fair; and when Henderson's name was first mentioned to James, he replied, that "he knew that smike well enough, and that it was not."* But this, instead of making against the truth of Henderson's confession, appears rather to confirm it. If the court, or Patrick Galloway, the court-chaplain (for he was said to have been the agent in the business), had undertaken to provide a counterfeit, he would have produced some one whose appearance tallied better with the king's description; while again, the story which Henderson told, although agreeing in outline and in many important particulars with that of James, yet varies from it in points too little complimentary to the latter to have been forged to defend him. In spite of the unbelief of the Edinburgh ministers, we feel constrained to accept this new witness; and although it leaves the cause which led to the catastrophe more obscure than before, yet it is a caution to historical scepticism, confirming as it does the king's declaration in some of its least probable features. Except for Henderson, most persons would probably have rejected the entire account as wholly incredible; or if they had taken it to be true, they would have found an explanation of it in the king's own suspicion that young Ruthven was insane. James's folly, combined with Ruthven's madness, might have sufficed to produce every successive circumstance; and in the story of the stranger and his treasure, and in Ruthven's subsequent conduct, as described by James, there is a methodical absurdity very like insanity. We are reluctantly forced, however, to dismiss this interpretation. Henderson's evidence proves that there was an understanding of some kind between the brothers, though of what kind neither he knew nor any one.

* Calderwood vi. p. 49.

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Henderson stated before the council, that on the evening of Monday the 4th of August, he was directed *by the Earl of Gowrie* to be in readiness to ride to Falkland with Mr. Alexander at four o'clock the next morning. He obeyed as he was told. They reached Falkland as the court were mounting for the hunt; and Alexander, after speaking to the king, directed him (Henderson) to return at his best speed to Perth, and to say to his brother that "his majesty would come, and would be quiet." By ten o'clock he was again at home. The earl took him into the *study*, and asked him a few questions as to the persons who were at the hunt, &c. He was then dismissed. An hour later, Gowrie told him that he would be wanted in the afternoon to assist in the capture of a Highland thief, and he must see that his arms were in order. At twelve he was going to his own house to eat something before he started, when the steward told him that he had better stay where he was; the earl's body-servant was ill, and he should carry up the dishes for his lordship's dinner. He took up the first course; and as he was following with the second, the master (Alexander) came in and spoke a few words to the earl. The latter rose immediately. They went out together; and Henderson supposing, as he said, that they were going to the Highlands, sent his boy to fetch his steel-bonnet and gauntlets. Presently after, he learnt that the king was coming; and that they were going to the meadow to meet him. He threw aside his arms, therefore, and followed in his ordinary dress. When the royal party arrived at the house, he was sent to fetch drink; and soon after the earl called him, and said, that he was to go up to the master into the gallery. The earl himself followed him thither, directing him to remain with his brother, and to do whatever he was told. He asked what it was to be. The master merely answered that he was to wait in the study till he returned.* He was then locked in; and he knew nothing more till Alexander entered with the king.

From this time, substantially if not exactly, his account agrees with that of James. "The master," he said, "at his very entry, caught the dagger from his (Henderson's) girdle, and pointing it at the king's breast, exclaimed, 'Remember you of my father's murder. Ye shall now die for it.' In another moment he would have stabbed him on the spot, but that he (Henderson) darted forward and wrenched the weapon out of his hands." James, it is

* In this most important point Henderson's evidence is strongly confirmed. An attached servant of Gowrie, who was executed for his share in the riot which followed Ruthven's death, deposed on the scaffold, when he could gain nothing by telling a lie, that he had himself seen Henderson going up into the gallery with the earl; and that Henderson, in relating to him afterwards what had taken place, assured him that he was as ignorant as himself of the object with which he had been taken there.

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remembered, ungrateful for his deliverance, declared that Henderson had stood trembling and shaking, and attributed his escape to his own rhetoric. A discrepancy of this kind is, however, intelligible and natural. "Wanting the dagger," Henderson continues, and the king giving him gentle words, the master told him, "with many abominable oaths," to hold his peace; he need not be afraid; they would not hurt him if he would make such a promise as his brother and he would require of him. Ruthven then left the room. The king asked him who he was; he replied, "A servant of my lord's." "His majesty asked if my lord would do any evil to him." Henderson answered, "As God should judge him, he would himself die first." He was opening the window to give the alarm, when Alexander Ruthven re-entered. He had not seen the earl; but he said there was no remedy, the king must die. The story of the garter, absurd as it appeared, was true. Ruthven had a garter in his hand, and tried to bind the king with it, when he (Henderson again) dragged it away from him. Twice, he said, the king would have been "stickit" but for his interference; and, finally, in the last scuffle, he threw the window open, freed James from his assailant's grasp, and enabled him to call for help at the moment when his train was in the street. "Wilt thou not help?" Ruthven said to him. "Woe betide thee, thou wilt make us all dee." The next instant Sir John Ramsay entered; and Henderson, seeing that there was no more danger, and thinking that, in the excitement, he might very likely be run through the body, slipped away and concealed himself.

Such is Henderson's story, which is strongly confirmed in many of its details, and seems consistent and credible throughout. It is without the purpose or connection which would have been given to a forgery; and when the ministers at Edinburgh refused to believe the man's statement unless he was executed for complicity in treason and repeated his story on the scaffold, they left the balance of charity decidedly on the king's side. To have hanged Henderson on the ground of his own confession (as Robert Bruce, the spokesman of the Assembly on this occasion, desired), would have been a barbarous murder.

The scene in the study is, therefore, we think, to be taken as ascertained, in its essential features; and also, to some extent, the complicity of Gowrie. There is no reason for doubting that Gowrie was, as Henderson said, aware of his brother's morning ride to Falkland; and of the concealment of Henderson in the cabinet. For the meaning of it all, however, we are as much at a loss as ever. The difficulties in the supposition of an intended attack on James seem still insuperable. The Ruthvens may have shared in all the wild feelings of the times. They might have felt that a deadly feud lay between them and the king. There

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is no unlikelihood in their having nourished a plan of revenge. The objection is, that their preparations point in no way to a deliberate commission of a crime. They had kinsmen enough of their own blood from whom to have chosen their confederate; or there were villains enough in Scotland of any blood, without trusting themselves to an ignorant and unarmed domestic. That Henderson had a dagger with him was only an accident; and Alexander Ruthven was equally unprovided. Such a scheme with such an accomplice was never yet devised for the murder of a king.

On the other hand, that there was a plot on the part of James to kill the Ruthvens is still more inconceivable. Henderson's evidence, if true, is of course conclusive on this point. But if we set Henderson aside, it is still preposterous that the king would have attempted to kill a popular nobleman in his own house, attended, at most, by sixteen half-armed companions. The domestic retinue of the Ruthvens outnumbered four times the train which he brought with him; the people of Perth were better subjects of their provost than of their sovereign; and the mere issue of the actual circumstances ought not to blind any reasonable thinker to the unlikelihood of the success of such an adventure if purposely undertaken. Again, we could make allowance for the habits of the age. If the king believed himself injured, he might be tempted, like his subjects, to fall back upon private revenge. But to hazard his own person in any such romantic piece of villany, was little in character with James VI.; and if the evidence were as strong against him as it is in reality insignificant and worthless, we should be still incredulous.

Here, therefore, we pause to say a few words of Mr. James the novelist. At the head of this article we have placed an exceedingly bad novel called the *King's Plot;* one of a vast multitude of such, for which we are indebted to the industry of this writer, who has used his inventive powers to make the hypothesis of the king's guilt plausible.

If there was more ability in his workmanship, we should have to quarrel with him more seriously. As the matter stands, we content ourselves with protesting against this and all similar dealings with history as unpermitted and unjust. We ask with all seriousness, by what right Mr. James, or any man, in dealing with historical persons and historical facts, presumes, on his own authority, as if he was some inspired seer into the secrets of all things, to resolve doubts into certainties—to write out three volumes of consecutive narrative in the perfect indicative tense—inventing facts where evidence fails, omitting others where evidence is inconvenient; and when we bring him to the bar and demand his au-

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thorities; to tell us quietly that he is a writer of romance, not of reality, and to decline to plead? On behalf of history, we entreat the public to withhold their approbation from such productions, whatever be their imaginative attractiveness. Let it be understood that, if the romance-writer chooses to invent actions, he must be so good as to invent the actors at the same time. And for Mr. James, we invite him, if he is capable of so subjective an effort, to a few moments of self-reflection. Supposing he, Mr. James the popular novelist, were to find himself displayed in a "three volumes," practising wisdom or practising folly, as the case might be, credited with a book, for instance, which he might or might not like to acknowledge,—what would be his sensations? He would not be wholly pleased with the writer of such volumes, or admit as a valid defence, that he had been described only as doing what, in such writer's opinion, he was likely to have done. He would call the pretty "fiction" an ugly lie. He would say that he was himself the best judge of what he was "likely" to do in such and such circumstances. In reasonable probability he would indict the gifted author for a libel, and recover substantial damages. Let him consider, then, how it is like to stand with himself in the libel-court up above; and in what coin damages are said to be paid there. The toleration of "historical romance," little as men know it, is a strange evidence of their disbelief in the continued existence of men and women after they pass off out of this world. If the novelists, and for that matter the historians too, had any real idea that the names with which they deal so freely belong to living persons, who will one day call them to account, their pens would run across their paper rather less rapidly.

However, to leave this, we repeat, that if it be incredible that the Ruthvens intended to kill the king, so it is incredible that the king intended to murder them. And yet between these interpretations, what third is possible?

Robertson comes to our assistance with a speculation which is ingenious and at first sight plausible.

He links together the threads which connected the Ruthvens with the court of Elizabeth. He observes that the earl's younger brothers found a warm welcome in England after the catastrophe. He mentions, though without giving his authority, that a mysterious English ship-of-war was lying in the Forth during the summer of that year; and he conjectures that Elizabeth, alarmed at James's secret coquetry with Rome and Madrid, had instigated Gowrie, while he was in London, to re-enact the raid of Ruthven, and send the king to her a prisoner. The royal person of James had been taken into irregular custody so many times previously, that no particular respect was attached to it; and with an ade-

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quate motive Elizabeth might not impossibly have conceived such an intention. If it had been made clear to her that the true interests (or what she conceived to be such) of the two countries were put in peril by James's scheming; that it was, on the whole, good that his liberty of doing mischief should be curtailed; she was neither likely herself to have felt scruples on the propriety of laying hands upon him, nor, in the state of Scotland, would there have been much difficulty in persuading an adventurous nobleman to make the attempt. Gowrie, too, was her near kinsman; and if the seizure was to be made respectable, his rank, his Calvinistic leanings, and the traditions of his family, made him a likely person to have been selected as her instrument.

At best, however, this is but a conjecture, unsupported by a particle of evidence; and in the important point of motive it breaks down. Had James been within her reach in his childhood, Elizabeth would doubtless have gladly taken possession of him. The union of the kingdoms was the constant object of the Tudor sovereigns. Their policy was to unite the royal families of the two kingdoms by intermarriage; and to constitute themselves the guardians of the Scotch princes or princesses in their minorities; if possible, to bring them up in England, with English sympathies; and either to connect the crowns in a single marriage, as Henry VIII. would have done, if he could have secured Mary for Edward; or when the sovereign of Scotland was heir-presumptive to the English crown, to render his accession easy, by breaking down the barriers of national antipathy. Elizabeth wished to marry Mary to an English nobleman; and afterwards, if she could have had James in London, and trained him as her own child, she would have given him a hold upon English affections, and in no way have injured the respect which the people were to be taught to feel for their future monarch.

But the circumstances were wholly altered at the time of the Gowrie conspiracy. Her long and glorious reign had enabled her to smooth the way for James's succession. Scotchman though he was, and although he had loved to play round the edge of mischief, dipping his fingers in it as deeply as he dared, her authority had sufficed to keep him out of serious embroilments; nor was there real danger from his present trifling. While he remained in Scotland she was able to control him sufficiently. To have carried him off in his mature manhood, when her own life was so near its inevitable close, would have stirred into activity all the old animosities between the two nations,—would have encumbered her with a captive more embarrassing, if less dangerous, than his mother had been, and would have exhibited her intended successor in the eyes of her subjects as a helpless, contemptible puppet. Elizabeth had experienced sufficient vexation

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already from a royal prisoner. She was not likely in her old age to invite a similar difficulty, or to undo the labour of years by so blundering a policy.

This explanation, therefore, promises no standing-ground, and we seem to relapse into uncertainty. Nor is the story itself as yet complete. It was followed by a sequel in character with the rest; less important, though it cost another human life, but equally strange, equally vexatious and unsatisfactory.

In the spring of the year 1608, an attorney's clerk, by name Sprot, was reported to have whispered among his friends that the mystery which had so long perplexed every body was no mystery to him; that he, if he chose, could tell all about it. He was arrested; and he affirmed, on his examination before the council, that in the year of the conspiracy he had been a servant to one Logan, laird of Restalrig. In this capacity he had become privy to a correspondence between his master and the Earl of Gowrie, which had been carried on in the summer of 1600. Some of the letters he had contrived to steal; and when produced, they were found to contain the outlines of a plot for seizing the king, and imprisoning him in Fastcastle, a stronghold belonging to Logan. If these letters were genuine, the discovery of them was of course conclusive. There were circumstances about them, however, which made their authenticity more than suspicious. Sprot was known to be an adept at counterfeiting handwriting; he had delayed his confession till Logan's death made a satisfactory investigation impossible; and although he filled out the case with various details, and represented himself in his own person as having been actively guilty in arranging the scheme, the notorious debauchery and worthlessness of Logan's character—(he was a villain of a merely coarse and brutal description)—made it unlikely in a high degree that he would have been selected as an accomplice in treason by such a man as Gowrie; and the story was not believed.

As the simplest mode of resolving the uncertainty, Sprot was put in the boots; and he then declared that he had lied, and that the letters were written by himself. He still adhered in general, however, to the connection of Logan and Gowrie. There was a true conspiracy, he said, and he had been cognisant of it; and it answered the purposes of the council to accept his statements. He was arraigned and condemned for misprision of treason; and his crushed legs having been repaired sufficiently to enable him to appear on the scaffold, he was executed. A voluntary confession, which brought the maker of it to his end, would usually command some confidence. Under any circumstances, it is entitled to weight. In the present instance, nevertheless, it is remarkable that even the king's friends were not satisfied with

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their witness. Archbishop Spotswood, in his history, doubts whether he should even mention so improbable a story—regarding it "as a very fiction; and a mere invention of the man's own brains,"—and it seems to have been regarded as one of those diseased confessions into which men are sometimes tempted by an appetite for notoriety, like the acknowledgments of Satanic compacts so often made by unhappy women who died the victims of their vanity.*

Spotswood's rejection of Sprot will justify ours; and once more, therefore, we fall back on the barren narrative; there, if any where, to find the truth. The present writer is not so unwise as to suppose that he can explain a mystery with which contemporaries were perplexed, to whom the persons of the actors and a thousand other circumstances now lost for ever were familiarly known; nor will he waste the reader's time with unprofitable guesses which will lead him nowhere. It will be something, however, if we can separate with distinctness what is obscure from what is certain; and looked at carefully, the story will be found to yield, if not its full secret, yet some conclusions on which we may rest.

If we run over in our minds the outline of the events of the 5th of August, the chief difficulties will be seen to be two:

First—why did James consent to accompany Alexander Ruthven, without attendants, into a secluded part of Gowrie's house? And second—why was Andrew Henderson placed in the study?

We know, from James's word, that some bitter secret existed between himself and the Ruthvens; he said that he had matter against them to take their lives if he pleased to do it. And when he was once in those lonely galleries, with the doors locked behind him, sudden panic may have led to expressions of distrust, and distrust have led to anger; and when the hot words had once found vent, the remaining tragedy might have followed with the greater ease the less it was premeditated. But what took him into the gallery at all? We will not affront the king's understanding with believing that he was enticed by a pot of gold. The many lies which he certainly told entitle us to disregard his mere word; and, after making all allowance for his necessities and his avarice, we feel that in this point the general scepticism was just. We must reject the story, in the form at least in which it was related by himself. It was not this, but some-

* Spotswood's History, p. 509. The archbishop was present at Sprot's trial, and also witnessed his death. He made no secret of his incredulity even at the time. "A little before the execution, Mr. John Spotswood, bishop of Glasgow, said to Mr. Patrick Galloway, 'I am afraid this man will make us all ashamed.' Mr. Patrick answered, 'Let alone, my lord; I shall warrant him;' and, indeed, he had the most part of the speech to him on the scaffold." Calderwood, vi. p. 780.

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thing far different from this, of which Alexander Ruthven spoke to him after his hurried ride from Falkland; and the real business which tempted him was something which he was either ashamed, or, for some other reason, did not venture to confess.

All the circumstances unite to force this conclusion upon us. *There already existed some secret,* we must repeat again and again, to which both brothers were a party. It has occurred to us that this secret may have been connected with Gowrie's reputation as a magician. The room to which James was taken was Gowrie's cabinet. Ruthven may have offered to show him either the philosopher's stone, or the elixir vitæ, or the inscription on the seal of Solomon—some mystic absurdity, or some natural discovery supposed to be mystic, some experiment in which Henderson's assistance may have been required. Something of this kind may easily have excited James's curiosity; while the tremors and sense of guilt with which the dabbling in these occult matters must have been accompanied would have kept him silent afterwards, and at the time might have agitated him into panic.

Either this it may have been, or one of a thousand other possibilities. But when they crossed the hall there can, we think, have been no intention, on Ruthven's part, of any act of violence. He may have had questions to ask the king; he may have had expostulations in secret to make to him; but assuming (as we are satisfied that we may assume) the scene in the study to have been accurately described, we are forced to look on it as an unpremeditated accident. We are forced to suppose that *a quarrel took place in the suite of rooms between the hall-staircase and the study-door,* when Henderson first became a witness of the interview. We do not know how long they were in these rooms, or what took place in them; but we observe that, whereas James says that on entering the study he asked if Henderson was the man whom he was brought to see, Henderson himself heard the king use no such words at all; he describes Ruthven's attack as instantaneous, as if it was the consequence of something else immediately antecedent. What, then, was this? A gleam of light is thrown upon it by a passage in a letter of Sir Henry Neville, Lord Gowrie's friend, to Sir Ralph Linwood. Neville was likely to have informed himself carefully on a matter which affected him so nearly. And if he has touched the right clue, we can understand readily why we have so little information on so serious a catastrophe; and why (which otherwise would be inexplicable) the wiser statesmen of both kingdoms have left us no record of their opinions.

Neville's words are these: "Out of Scotland we hear that there is no good agreement, but rather an open dissidence, between the king and his wife; and many are of opinion that the

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discovery of some affection between her and the Earl of Gowrie's brother, who was killed with him, was the truest cause and motive of that tragedy."

Mr. James has done his best to bring this hint into discredit by the exaggerated use which he has made of it; and it was perhaps nothing more than a contemporary conjecture. If a guess, however, it was one of those happy guesses which explain difficulties without involving us in extravagance, and enable us to see how events may have happened without straining the ordinary probabilities of human action. James was jealous of the queen, as the best evidence shows, without just cause. Murray had fallen a victim to his suspicions, and the queen had been slandered. Let us suppose him similarly jealous of young Ruthven, and the subject to have risen between them in these rooms. Ruthven, devoted, not dishonourably, to his mistress, may have spoken freely, as he naturally would speak to a prince whom he despised. The angry words may have leapt to and fro; James, as he never failed to do in his uncourteous insolence, may have touched some delicate and sensitive point of feeling; then, in turn, Ruthven's passion may have brought up before him the injuries of his house; and in a moment of anger he may have seen in the caitiff prince who was quaking before him, not a king of Scotland, but a mere miserable human wretch, whose longer life the world could well dispense with.

This is, of course, nothing more than a suggestion of the manner in which the catastrophe may have been caused; yet other probabilities point in the same direction. In the two years which followed, the Ruthven family were the occasion of a standing feud between James and the queen. We find accounts of secret interviews between the latter and the two younger brothers of the Earl of Gowrie, who escaped to England. In 1603 Beatrice Ruthven, who had been sent away from court, was secretly brought into the palace at midnight, and state-secrets of grave importance communicated to her: the queen and the Ruthvens formed a party on one side, and James on the other. Such incidents are slight in themselves, but they are indicative of a tissue of circumstances underneath the texture which was presented to the world. The genuine picture was painted over with a poor daub, and only here and there the original forms and colours become visible.

Finally, Sir Henry Neville's conjecture will explain what otherwise it is hard to account for,—Elizabeth's outward acquiescence in James's story. Gowrie was as near of kin to her as James himself; and the interest which she exhibited in the exiled family, if it does not disprove her belief in the guilt of Gowrie and his brother, was held to show at the time that she gave but

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dubious credit to it. But she probably felt that an investigation might compromise important interests; that the secure succession of the Scotch prince was the only visible means by which the union of the kingdoms could be effected; and that it was better not to press an inquiry which might exhibit James in a light too contemptible to be endured. We may satisfy ourselves, perhaps, that she acquitted him of intentional crime. His folly, miserable as it seemed, was not too great for England to bear in consideration of the benefits which he would bring with him.

Art. II.—CRIME IN ENGLAND, AND ITS TREATMENT.

Nineteenth Report of the Inspectors appointed to visit the different Prisons of Great Britain, presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty. London, 1856.

Reports of the Directors of Convict Prisons for the Year 1855, *presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty.* London, 1856.

England and Wales: Tables showing the Number of Criminal Offenders for the Year 1854, *presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty.* London, 1855.

Crime: its Amount, Causes, and Remedies. By Frederic Hill, Barrister-at-law, late Inspector of Prisons. London, 1853.

Crime in England: its Relation, Character, and Extent, as developed from 1801 *to* 1848. By Thomas Plint. London, 1851.

Reformatory Schools for the Children of the Perishing and Dangerous Classes, and for Juvenile Offenders. By Mary Carpenter. London, 1851.

On the Principles of Criminal Law. London, 1846.

It is difficult to say whether the excess or the absence of party-feeling is the greater evil. Suffering under the latter, we may be apt to exaggerate its disadvantages. They are forced upon our attention. But we ought not to overlook whatever counterbalancing good, or (if this phrase be demurred to) partial compensations, may accompany them.

Among these, not the least is the following: that men's minds, set free from the more exciting, though not more important topics of political controversy, have leisure to deal with those great social problems which, while our eyes have been turned in another direction, have assumed such a vast magnitude, and so threatening a character. How to promote and secure the physical health of the people; to increase their means of intellectual training; to establish on a happier foundation the relations of the employer

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and the employed; to diminish pauperism, and turn pauper-labour to the best account;—these are matters, the successful treatment of which is felt to be the proper business of the highest statesmanship. The attention devoted to them, and to kindred subjects, by such men as Lord John Russell, Lord Stanley, and Sir John Pakington, is one of the most hopeful signs of the times. It seems to give promise of the solution of some at least of the difficulties that surround them. Men who have been trained in the habits, or who live in the expectation of office, generally avoid taking up questions till the time for dealing with them practically is at hand. The *executive* character of their minds, which fits them for the work of government, and which is confirmed by familiarity with it, keeps them aloof, by a kind of instinct, from matters as yet wholly indeterminate.

Of all the social problems which can engage a nation, at once the most urgent and the most difficult is that which the word CRIME suggests. Others involve, comparatively speaking, mere matters of convenience. This is, or may become, a question of life and death. The Sphynx proposes her riddle; we must discover it, and annihilate her, or ourselves perish. Society exists only by obedience to law, and crime is the defiance and violation of law. It is impossible, however, to grapple effectively with it till we know its real character and extent. Statistical returns, the reports of prison-inspectors and gaol-chaplains, and, what is almost more valuable, the personal testimony of those — the Howards and Mrs. Frys of our own day—who have gone down into the dark hiding-places of sin to seek and save them that were lost, have given us, it is true, much valuable information, which the most wicked indifference of an earlier period, and its inferior organisation for purposes of inquiry, had hitherto withheld. But much still remains unknown which it is essential to know. The experience of philanthropists is necessarily limited—confined to a few individual cases. Inadequacy characterises also official returns and reports. Crime and *detected* crime are not yet convertible terms. Government statistics, therefore, present us with a part of the case only. We cannot hope that it will ever be otherwise. But there can be no doubt that, however deficient such returns may and must be, they do approximate much more closely to a faithful representation of the total delinquencies of the kingdom than at any previous period. The percentage of acquittals to committals is yearly diminishing, notwithstanding the greater advantages allowed to prisoners for purposes of defence. Many circumstances have conspired to this result. Our police-arrangements are better; the old watchmen, who, so far from affording protection to others, only earned it for themselves by their decrepitude, have vanished; the character of the judicial

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bench is beyond suspicion as regards its integrity. If stipendiary magistrates were allowed to supersede country clergymen and retired traders at quarter and borough sessions, the learning and general competence of its ministers, low as well as high, would be equally unassailable. Laws which, by prohibiting natural rights, or by creating artificial offences, were stimulants of crime, have been repealed; crimes and their penalties have been more justly balanced. As the law and its administrators have thus become more worthy of respect, greater respect has come to be entertained for them. The increased freedom consequent thereon of prosecutors, witnesses, and jurors, from scruples within and intimidation without, interfering with the discharge of their duties, has materially lessened guilt's chance of escape before or on trial. Comparison of the Criminal Returns of our own with an earlier period is, therefore, unfair to the former. It places us at inequitable disadvantage, for which we must make allowance, unfortunately without knowing precisely what allowance to make. There are general indications, however, which sanction a hopeful view. Let us briefly review some of those indications. Practically, every one knows that if crime has not decreased, it has become less dangerous. A degree of security, both of person and property, is felt now which probably was unknown at any past period of our history. Guilt has not been destroyed; but it has been, to a certain extent, disarmed and driven out of sight. It has lost its original boldness. Instead of stopping carriages on Hounslow Heath, it pilfers in the streets of large cities. Offences against property without violence form at present the staple crime of England. We do not say that this is a change necessarily for the better, but it is a change which is, at any rate, worthy of notice: it shows at least that crime is *weaker* than before. Another and less equivocal sign is the great improvement in public manners which marks this generation, compared with the generations that have preceded it. The literature of the day bears conspicuous witness to the growth, at any rate, of outward decency. The novels of Scott and Dickens are in favourable moral contrast with those of Fielding, and Smollett, and Sterne. Innocent and instructive amusements have taken the place of those which were neither innocent nor instructive. Words and allusions which sixty years ago were common in the mouths of "persons of quality," would now be deemed unclean in the mouth of any respectable scavenger, and might even be resented by him from others. Vice, then, if we can say no more for it, is certainly less *gross* than it was.*

* See the evidence of Mr. Francis Place before a committee of the House of Commons on Education, 1835, extracted in Porter's *Progress of the Nation*, vol. iii. pp. 241-244.

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These symptoms, though it may not do to lay too much stress upon them in our social diagnosis, are, so far as they go, favourable. Other facts, in part, no doubt connected with those stated before, are seemingly no less encouraging. Mr. Horace Mann tells us that between 1818 (the date of our earliest statistics on the subject) and 1851, the increase of day-scholars in England has been 218 per cent, and of Sunday scholars 404 per cent; while the increase of population was but 54 per cent.* The hare, therefore, is gaining on the tortoise. Whether it will ever overtake it, be able to make up for the latter's long start, we will not here speculate. Whatever view be entertained of the influence of education upon crime, the efforts to promote it which have been of late so generally and energetically made bear witness to a growth of public spirit and benevolence, which cannot have failed, one would imagine, to manifest themselves in other ways also. Nor have men, while more regardful of their fellows, been at all indifferent to themselves. If they have remembered to "do good and communicate," they have not forgotten that "the merciful man doeth good to his own self." Property, therefore, has also outstripped population in the rapidity of its increase; the former having multiplied itself fourfold in the same space of time wherein the latter has nearly doubled itself.† We are not among those (if there be any such) who take the material interests of a nation as an infallible index of its virtue. Neither are we among those who, with equal though counter exaggeration, deem that physical prosperity must necessarily be in the inverse ratio of moral and spiritual well-being. There is truth in Goldsmith's lines:

> "Ill fares the land, to hast'ning ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates, and men decay."

But the two things do not necessarily go together. If indolence is the symptom and parent of evil, industry, when directed to the attainment of ends not in themselves vicious, is the sign and source of much good. It necessitates the exercise of many virtues, which are essential as the foundation of character, though miserably insufficient when they make up the whole superstructure too,—the virtues of integrity, foresight, punctuality. Though not so closely connected as many men imagine, the common-*weal* is thus not altogether necessarily opposed to the common-*wealth*.

National education and riches, then, have increased faster than the numbers of the people; the outward signs of immorality in the literature, amusements, manners, and conversation of all classes have greatly diminished; charity is more fervent and

* Educational Census for 1851, pp. 15, 16.
† Census of Great Britain in 1851, p. 55.

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active than it was; every citizen feels himself securer than his fathers were from outrage and violence. Is the community which makes so fair a show outwardly but a whited sepulchre, the decorous hiding-place of corruption and death, a goodly apple rotten at the core? It has advisers who would persuade it so, like the physicians who perplexed M. de Pourceaugnac: "Parbleu! je ne suis pas malade." "Mauvais signe lorsqu'un malade ne sent pas son mal." They aim to prove that with the more general diffusion of education, the unprecedented growth of capital, the revival of a deeper sense of individual and national responsibility, guided by a wiser social philosophy than our fathers felt and knew, crime has gone on increasing too as fast as education and wealth, faster than population. Now we have pointed out why any comparison of statistical documents is unfair to the present age. It shows only the relative quantity and quality of *detected* crime at the periods it reviews, and not of the actual offences. The very fact that more of the crime committed is discovered now than before, only shows that society has taken up arms more resolutely than ever against it, and is resolved to drag it from its secret dens into the light it hates, and in which, we hope, it is ultimately destined to perish. But there is confusion involved in the words "increase of crime," which makes them fertile of misapprehension. A person is told that, within a specified time, crime has augmented, in regard to population, at the rate, according to some, of three, to others, of six to one. He infers that the *criminal class* has increased relatively to all other classes of the same community in the same proportion. There cannot be a greater mistake. Every unit added to that class implies a five, or six, or tenfold addition to the aggregate of offences, which alone is exhibited in the tables. There are many crimes to each criminal. Thefts, as we have said, make up the great bulk of offences in modern England. The common thief, it is ascertained, may calculate ordinarily on a period of six years' impunity. The average of his earnings (if we may call them so) is about 150*l.* a-year.* That many offences must be yearly perpetrated to bring in this comfortable income is obvious. Of all committals in England, Mr. Frederic Hill calculates that 32 per cent are *re*-committals.† Other facts, pointing in the same direction, might be adduced; but these are sufficient. The social evils of our time are great enough without exaggeration, which, to the extent to which it is sometimes carried, is likely to produce despair rather than to rouse to vigorous resistance. If, in spite of the counteractions which have been enumerated, guilt, like a gangrene, were, *not*

* Report of the Constabulary Force Commissioners, 1839, pp. 12 and 44 (quoted in the *Edinburgh Review*, July 1849, art. i. p. 13).

† Crime, &c. p. 321.

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slowly, but steadily extending its ravages over the body corporate, we could do nothing but wait hopelessly till it reached the seat of life; for it would be springing from no accidental and temporary causes, but from the principles on which society in England is organised,—principles which it is next to impossible to revise and reverse, for they are interwoven with its life. And we cannot take states to pieces, to reconstruct them artificially after a better model. As Sir James Mackintosh said, they are not made, but grow. We may and ought to be aware of the peculiar dangers to which a particular constitution of society is liable, and should do our best to neutralise them. But if that constitution is itself essentially vicious, if the source of life is tainted, we can but defer the evil day; which, under such circumstances, had best come swiftly. We are but damming up the torrent, that at the last it may burst with more overwhelming and desolating power.

The fact, then, that the quantity of *detected offences* against the law is more in proportion to the population now than was the case half a century ago,—how much more it is difficult to say, computations vary widely,*—does not warrant the conclusion that *those who perpetrate them* have multiplied at an equal rate. It is even compatible with the supposition that that class is, relatively to all others, less numerous and only more active than heretofore. We say it is compatible with the supposition; for the fact is hard of ascertainment. There are considerations, however, which give a certain degree of probability to the more hopeful view. If crime were advancing with rapid strides among the hitherto honest orders of society, it is almost inevitable that a growing demoralisation of the community would ensue. There is a *consensus* of all the parts of political, as well as of natural, organisations. If one member suffers, the whole body must suffer with it. But this demoralisation is not visible. On the contrary, in spite of many questionable, though isolated, phenomena, a higher moral tone than was customary a generation ago is clearly traceable. The presumption therefore remains, till a stronger presumption can be shown on the other side, that on the whole we are not worse, but rather better, than our forefathers. We are not on this account to remit our exertions against crime; but to redouble them, with livelier anticipations of success. It was the first Napoleon's policy, when he would inspirit his soldiers for a great effort, to magnify the odds in their favour, to exaggerate the strength of his own forces, and to disparage that of the enemy. If he showed his unscrupulousness thereby, he

* An increase of 350 per cent over population between 1805 and 1845 is commonly stated. Mr. Plint, in his ably-reasoned essay (named at the head of this article), pp. 12, 13, shows ground for reducing this to less than 200 per cent increase.

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showed his knowledge of human nature. The very same encouragement which he was in the habit of administering by falsehood, we may derive, it is believed, from truth. It is an advantage we have not felt disposed, as our readers have seen, to throw away.

We will now endeavour to present the real facts of the case, so far as we can gather them from statistical sources; and to indicate their bearing on certain moot questions, as to the conditions which seem, on the one hand, to check, and, on the other hand, to favour, the production of crime.

The Government Returns divide offences into six classes: (1.) Offences against the person; (2.) Offences against property, committed with violence; (3.) Offences against property, committed without violence; (4.) Malicious offences against property; (5.) Forgery, and offences against the currency; (6.) Other offences not included in the above classes,—under which last division are comprised high treason, sedition, riot, and other direct outrages against constituted authorities, violations of the game-laws, perjury, &c. The total of offences in 1854 (the latest year for which tables are published) was 29,359. Of these, 23,917 were offences against property without violence. The increase of commitments during the year in question, Mr. Redgrave tells us, was 8·5 per cent over the four preceding years, and 7·5 per cent over the average of the ten preceding years. This increase, however, was altogether confined to the several modes of offence against property, chiefly those without violence; and those against the currency, together with forgery. The former have increased 11 per cent since 1853; the latter to much the same extent, viz. from 850 in 1853 to 963 in 1854. Other offences fluctuate greatly in amount from time to time; these two classes seem steadily on the increase. They are, it will be observed, just the offences which professional criminals are most likely to practise; they therefore do not argue general demoralisation. The proportion which they hold to the total of crime is becoming constantly greater. In 1854, offences against property without violence were more than 81 per cent of the aggregate of all offences; in 1845, 76·2 per cent; in 1841, only 73·2 per cent. "In forgeries of Bank-of-England notes," says Mr. Redgrave, "there was an increase of 33 per cent in the last year's commitments, and the offence has been on the increase for the last ten years. The same remark applies to uttering counterfeit coin, in which on the last year alone the increase was 11·1 per cent."* The increase of offences of these two classes may in part spring from the greater dexterity, and not solely from the added numbers, of those who

* Criminal Returns, p. iv.

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have recourse to them. We have already mentioned the calculated value of a thief's annual plunder, and the average term of freedom on which he can reckon. Forgery and coining obviously are crimes confined to but a few; since secrecy and skill are essential to their perpetration. But to make their dishonest toil profitable, to pay the expenses even of the necessary instruments for carrying it on, these few must individually be guilty of a vast number of offences. Mr. Hill mentions a case in which fourteen persons, the families of three brothers, are computed, as utterers of base coin, to have committed 20,000 distinct offences.* We arrive, then, at the comforting conclusion, that the crimes which are most on the increase are those which least imply a corresponding increase of criminals, and which least indicate a decadent state of public morals generally. The Criminal Returns give us an elaborate comparison, under each head of their sixfold division, of 1854 with 1853. The contrast, however, of two successive years, or of any *two* years merely, is little instructive. We need a longer period to exhibit tendencies, to eliminate accidental and disturbing forces of only temporary moment. For this purpose, groups of years ought to be taken. We therefore borrow from a more copious table, by Mr. Redgrave, the following presentment of the total number of persons committed for trial, or bailed, in each of the two *quinquennial periods* ending respectively in 1849 and 1854, and the offences with which the persons were charged:

Class of Offences.	1850-4.	1845-9.
No. 1. Offences against the person	10,294	10,318
„ 2. Offences against property, committed with violence	9,515	8,958
„ 3. Offences against property, committed without violence	109,930	109,075
„ 4. Malicious offences against property	1,274	1,028
„ 5. Forgery, and offences against the currency .	4,200	2,729
„ 6. Other offences not included in the above classes	3,486	4,300
Total	138,699	136,408

The increase of malicious offences against property alone seems out of harmony with the remarks that have preceded. They are not likely to be the work of those who live by wrong-doing. Mr. Redgrave, however, in stating the multiplication of such offences between 1853 and 1854, explains it as "arising chiefly from the number of offences on railway-lines, many of them of

* Hill, p. 58.

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a mischievous rather than a malicious character."* With this single exception, we may note incidentally, the crime of England is in curious harmony with its master-passion. Guilt dogs the heels of commercial enterprise like a mocking shadow, not without a distorted resemblance to the object from whose brightness it is cast. Eagerness for *gain* inspires alike the honest man and the rogue. Both have an unparalleled avidity for property,—the latter without sufficiently discriminating *meum* and *tuum*. When war was the mania of England, crimes of violence abounded. Now that commerce is its god, we have crimes of fraud. The social state of a nation, the habitudes of its respectable citizens, are thus not obscurely mirrored in those of its outcasts. But the matter is too large to enter further upon here. We return to details not less instructive, if less attractive, than more general speculation.

We have already stated that the increase of crime in 1854 was 7·5 per cent over the average of the ten preceding years. It is desirable, however (lest we fall into the error of estimating the whole by possibly an exceptional part, of taking a retrogressive bend in the river for its prevailing course, or, like the ancient philosopher, of presenting a single brick as a sample of the house), to make a wider survey. Mr. Plint's work gives us information up to the point where the retrospect of the Returns of this year stops short. He affirms that "the ratio of crime to population in 1801 was 54 in 100,000; and in 1845, 156 in 100,000, or less than 200 per cent increase."† This increase relatively to population he thus distributes over the several portions of time between the extreme limits:

1801 to 1821	. . .	112·0 per cent.
1821 to 1831	. . .	26·9 „
1821 to 1836	. . .	32·1 „
1821 to 1845	. . .	35·6 „
1831 to 1845	. . .	6·9 „
1836 to 1845	. . .	2·7 „

Thus, though up to 1845 crime was still increasing faster than population, the rate of its increase was being, on the whole, gradually retarded. Coming down later, we have, in appearance, still more cheering results. "The number of committals in 1844," said Professor Walsh, in a paper read to the statistical section of the British Association, at its recent meeting in Chel-

* Criminal Returns, p. iv.

† Page 13. The text says "1 in 54" and "1 in 156" respectively. This is obviously a misprint, which it would be easy to detect, even if the numbers were not correctly given, "54 in 100,000" and "156 in 100,000," for the years 1801 and 1845 respectively, in p. 11.

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tenham, "was but 26,542, and in 1854, 29,529: the population had increased in the interval in a greater proportion." By the comparison, however, of individual years almost any result might be gained. In 1842, for example, the number of commitments was 31,309, which shows a positive decrease in 1854, and not merely one relatively to population. The average of crime for a term of years is the only fair criterion; and that shows an increase in 1854 over the average of the ten preceding years, the extent of which has already been intimated.

Crime has not, then, within the last fifty years increased equally in equal portions of time. Is it distributed uniformly over the surface of the country, or is it more abundant in some districts than in others? If groups of 100,000 individuals were taken, without selection, from different parts of England—from Cornwall and Cumberland—from Lincolnshire and Lancashire—would they be found to contain much the same proportion of offenders? Not so. For in Cumberland, in 1848, there were but 70 offenders in every 100,000 of the population; while in Middlesex there were 277—nearly quadruple the number of the northern county. Nor does the ratio of the increase of crime in different districts correspond (as we might perhaps have expected) with the actual amount of crime they at present exhibit. Where offences are least numerous, there they are most rapidly multiplying; where they are most numerous, they increase more slowly. Thus, from 1801 to 1845 the rate of augmentation of crime in Middlesex was less than 100 per cent; in Cumberland it was from 350 to 400 per cent.

The annexed table, which we extract from Mr. Plint's essay, is on this point most instructive:

COUNTIES IN WHICH CRIME WAS THE LOWEST IN 1801.			COUNTIES IN WHICH CRIME WAS THE HIGHEST IN 1801.		
County.	Ratio of crime to 100,000 of pop. in 1801.	Increase of crime, 1801 to 1845.	County.	Ratio of crime to 100,000 of pop. in 1801.	Increase of crime, 1801 to 1845.
1. Westmoreland .	15	450 to 500	31. Gloucester..	56	250 to 300
2. Cumberland ...	15	350 to 400	32. Norfolk	59	150 to 200
3. Durham	16	350 to 400	33. Essex	63	150 to 200
4. Cornwall	23	200 to 250	34. Sussex	64	100 to 150
5. Derby	24	250 to 300	35. Southampton	66	100 to 150
6. Northumberland	24	200 to 250	36. Wilts	67	100 to 150
7. Rutland	24	350 to 400	37. Kent.....	68	100 to 150
8. Lincoln	27	300 to 350	38. Surrey	73	100 to 150
9. York	27	150 to 200	39. Warwick ...	92	100 to 150
10 Devon	27	350 to 400	40. Middlesex ..	148	under 100

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It is only necessary to add Mr. Plint's pregnant and philosophical commentary:

"The great fact indicated by the different ratios of increase is unquestionably, that in countries densely populated, the incentives and occasions of crime have nearly reached their maximum; and that in countries in which the population is becoming more dense,—that is, more aggregated in towns or cities,—those incentives and occasions are just beginning to be felt." *

The facts and considerations just presented throw light upon a much-disputed question as to the relative moral influence of agriculture and manufacturing industry upon a people. There are some who maintain the baneful effects of the latter, including therein both the factory and mining systems. To make out their case—nay, to give it even *primâ facie* plausibility—they should prove that, in proportion as these extend, crime multiplies at an accelerated ratio; and that where they have not been introduced, crime is at its *minimum*. We need hardly say, nothing of this has ever been established. On the contrary, during the last fifty years, while, as we have already seen, the rate of progress of crime has been much retarded, England has been gradually becoming more of a cotton-spinning and less of a corn-growing country. Nor, to descend to narrower ground, is the criminality of English counties small in proportion to their exclusively or predominantly agricultural character. For example, in Berkshire, in 1848, the number of criminals in every 100,000 of the inhabitants was 270, while in Lancashire it was only 193. In the same year, Suffolk was, relatively to its population, more criminal than Nottingham, Essex than Lancaster, Oxford than Derby, Wilts than York. The returns of 1854 exhibit a greater increase of offences in some prevailingly agricultural than in other mainly manufacturing counties. To take a few instances: crime in Hertford has multiplied at the rate of 23·2 per cent, in Lancashire at only 8 per cent; in Essex at the rate of 13·4 per cent, in Stafford at 2·8 per cent; in Suffolk, 19·4 per cent, in Chester, 2·5 per cent. Further, the delinquencies which occur in manufacturing districts are, for the most part, perpetrated by others than permanent artisan residents. Mr. Plint (whose book contains much valuable statistical information, as well as sound reasoning, of which we have freely availed ourselves) quotes police-returns for Manchester, exhibiting the class or occupation of those who were summarily convicted, or committed for trial, in 1849. From these it appears that

"The really manufacturing section of the Manchester population, though constituting one-half of the whole, only commits one-sixth of

* Plint, pp. 15, 16.

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the crime which is tried at the sessions and the assizes, and rather more than one-eighth of that which is summarily disposed of. It is also shown that the class of labourers, though little more than one-sixteenth of the population, and the various classes of handicrafts, constituting one-sixth of the population, each commit nearly as much crime as the manufacturing population; and that the really criminal and profligate class [thieves and prostitutes], combined with the class having *no trade*, and who may be concluded to belong to one or other of the two last-named, commit *one-third* of all the crime in Manchester."*

Further, as the same essayist points out, since the bulk of crime is perpetrated by what are called the lower classes,—not that they are more vicious than others, but that, from various causes, their transgressions take the form rather of illegal outbreaks than of tolerated sins,—the percentage of offences in any county will depend very much on the numerical proportion of the several social orders therein. The morality of the higher, middle, and operative classes may be on a par with that of their peers elsewhere; yet where the last is in excess, the percentage of crime to the whole population will be in excess also. This is of course the case in all densely-populated districts, and therefore in those which are seats of manufacturing industry. Allowance, then, should be made for this element of inequality in any comparative estimates of the morality of rural and factory populations. It does not, we may add, indicate the superiority of rustic virtue, that the crimes which most display what is distinctively called *vice*, sheer malignity,—which can be least attributed to professional malefactors, and which, therefore, in their frequency or infrequency, are the best key to the *morale* of those among whom chiefly they are perpetrated,—the two classes of offences against the person, and malicious offences against property, form a larger proportion of the grand total of offences in agricultural than in manufacturing localities. These considerations, in their collective force, seem to warrant the emphatic language of Mr. Clay, the chaplain of Preston gaol: "It is not a manufacturing population, as such, which fosters crime. It is not manufacturing Manchester, but multitudinous Manchester, which gives birth to whatever criminality may be imputable to it. It is the large town, to which both idle profligates and practised villains resort, as a likely field for the indulgence of sensuality, or the prosecution of schemes of plunder."

Such facts as those to which attention has now been directed, while they relieve the industrial organisation of a large and increasing proportion of our people from unmerited reproach, open out some very serious questions. Great cities are the refuge and

* Plint, pp. 123, 124.

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parents of crime. The present age is emphatically the age of great cities. Its tendency is to collect people together from outlying points into continually-increasing clusters, to condense population. "In 1801, the people of England were on an average 153 yards asunder, and 108 yards in 1851; the mean distance apart of their houses was 362 yards in 1801, and 252 yards in 1851."* Within the same period, "while the population of the country and of the small towns increased 71 per cent, the population of the large towns increased 189 per cent."† Thus the growth of the commercial and manufacturing interests in England,—though not directly the source of crime, though exercising, all things considered, an effect the reverse of demoralising on those engaged in them,—innocently supplies what seems to be a condition of crime. It is manufacturing Manchester that makes multitudinous Manchester. Where wealth and numbers are concentrated within a limited space, the predatory classes spring up under their shade, like fungi beneath the protecting boughs of some stately tree; or, to vary the metaphor, they have attached themselves to the manufacturing and commercial classes, as parasites to some nobler animal, on whose lifeblood they feed. If increasing population and wealth are the condition of increasing delinquency, the latter multiplying far more rapidly than the two former, and only slackening its rate of progress when it reaches a certain high maximum, to go much beyond which would be anarchy,—if this be the case, how to deal with it in a country like ours becomes a momentous problem. The obvious remedy (if it were feasible) would be to recur to that state of society which political economists call "stationary;"—which J. S. Mill so fascinatingly depicts,—stationary in capital and in numbers, but not stationary in knowledge and in virtue. No, nor stationary even in industrial improvements; but applying them to produce "their legitimate effect of abridging labour," instead of building up colossal fortunes, and increasing the number of labourers. At present, however, we might as well set out on a voyage of discovery for Utopia, as dream of introducing the "stationary state." In default thereof, what expedient can we find?

By many education is held up as the panacea—all sufficient to prevent the yet innocent and to reform the actual offender. We will briefly speak of this specific. By education in this connection is generally meant instruction in reading and writing, with a slight infusion of arithmetic. Many, indeed, protest against any such restricted sense being put upon the term, as they use it; but we must judge of them by their conduct rather

* Census, 1851, p. 16. † Ibid. p. 14.

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than by their words. In spite of their disclaimer, they are perpetually appealing in support of their views to prison-reports, and comparing the numbers of those who cannot read, or who cannot write, or who can do either or both only imperfectly, with each other, and with the much smaller aggregate of those who can read and write well. They even press "marriage-marks" into the service, and are rejoiced beyond measure if they can find a county in which an excess of crime is accompanied by an excess of those who "on the happiest day of their lives" signed the register with a cross. If there were reason, taking the common criteria, to believe that morality did vary as education, there is one circumstance which should prevent the conclusion, viz. that the criteria are not trustworthy. With regard, first, to marriage-marks, Mr. Horace Mann tells us that, "from various causes, some who can write nevertheless decline to sign the register." * Secondly, as to the reading and writing tests, considered as a clue to the amount of instruction received by convicts, the testimony of Mr. Charles Pearson, City solicitor, is worth hearing. The following is from his evidence before a Committee of the House of Lords in 1847:

"The returns received from the prisons as to the state of acquirements and education of prisoners are to a surprising extent in contradiction to what I believe to be the actual facts of the case. . . . . They (the prisoners) are perfectly aware that they are now objects of great compassion; that ignorance is supposed to be the cause of their position. For the purpose of the prison-returns, the question to them is, 'Can you read?' 'No.' 'Can you write?' 'No.' Prisoners recommend themselves to the compassion of the officers of the prison, who place them under the chaplain and the schoolmaster of the prison. In the course of a month or two they acquire a degree of intelligence, and a capacity for reading and writing, which would seem to show that the prison-school far surpasses any other seminary for education that the mind can conceive of, such is the rapidity of their progress. But let them get into the world again, and be brought again to prison, the same questions are put to them,—'Can you read?' 'No.' 'Can you write?' 'No.'—I have been *from my earliest infancy*† *a devoted advocate of education;* but I am satisfied that the cause of juvenile crime is not the absence of education."

He elsewhere states his conviction, derived from personal intercourse with the juvenile delinquents in Newgate, that "as a class they were not destitute of education, but that, on the

* Educational Census, p. 32, note.

† Mr. Pearson's parents and instructors were fortunate if, in his passage through "life's strange eventful history," he omitted the part of

> "the whining schoolboy,
> With his satchel and shining morning face,
> Creeping like snail unwillingly to school."

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contrary, a very large portion of them had received a considerable degree of instruction."*

But if we could rely on the ordinary tests, they would by no means establish the position they are often used to prove. Mr. Clay stated before the Lords, that "the cases of extreme ignorance among the juvenile and adult prisoners amount to 43 or 45 per cent." "If," says Mr. Mann, "the marriages of *minors* in 1851 be taken (which will probably show what was being taught, and how, about ten years ago), the extraordinary fact presents itself that of 31,987 minors married in 1851 (7737 males and 24,250 females), *no less than* 52·6 *per cent were unable to sign their names* (viz. 42·7 per cent of the males, and 55·8 per cent of the females),"†—that is to say, ignorance was greater among the population out of prison than among the samples of the criminal class of which Mr. Clay speaks.

Again, in Lancashire, in 1845, the ratio of criminals who could not read and write to all criminals was 13·7 per cent more than in Kent; of those who could read and write imperfectly, 12·8 per cent less. The more instructed county (Kent) had 158 criminals in 100,000 of its population; the less instructed only 146 in 100,000, giving an excess to the former of 7½ per cent.‡ This statement has a double significance: the manufacturing county, with less education, exhibits less crime than the agricultural county, with more education.

But further, if a close, and, with proper allowance for counteracting tendencies, a virtually unvarying correspondence between crime and ignorance could be detected, it would be an unwarrantable, and, we believe, an untrue inference, that the ignorance produced the crime. To prove things connected as cause and effect, something more than constant association,—which in this case you have *not*,—is needed. The alleged invariable concomitants may be concurrent effects of some other cause; and this, in those instances in which ignorance and guilt concur, is, we are convinced, very frequently the real bond. The indolence and recklessness and indifference to duty which have led a man at last within the walls of a prison kept him in youth outside the school-room, or prevented his profiting by opportunities of learning. The evidence of Captain George Hall, the governor of Parkhurst Prison, before the House of Lords, presents a striking corroboration of this opinion. He says that

"The great majority of boys sent there are uneducated; the proportion who could read and write with tolerable readiness would be but small; and the proportion of those who have any real understand-

* Reformatory Schools, pp. 18, 19.
† Educational Census, p. 32.
‡ Plint, p. 184.

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ing of what they read is very small indeed. Yet it is a remarkable fact, that of between 1100 and 1200 boys who have been received into Parkhurst from 1838 to 1847, there have been only 36 who have never been to school at all. But though the very large majority, 96 or 97 per cent, have been at school, they have learned little or nothing; they were truants: there are here truants from schools in all parts of the country. Many have been at the National Schools; many at private, or Lancastrian schools."*

In the same prison, in 1844, out of a total of 937 boys, only 30 had never been at school; 732 had been at day-schools longer than one year, having had on the average each three years and ten months schooling.

Some will say, this only shows the worthlessness of the schools which could turn out such hopeful pupils. We believe it to be as unfair, however, to lay the blame of the boys' ignorance upon their teachers as it would be to censure the legislators of the country for their lawlessness,—more so, perhaps. The disposition is the same which sets at defiance both the schoolmaster and the legislator. The fact of education having been received shows, in most cases, that the dispositions were there beforehand which it professes to have imparted. The fact of its not having been received, where the opportunity was copiously presented, witnesses frequently to the pre-existence of those evil qualities, the gradual growth of which is attributed to lack of knowledge. We do not undervalue the importance of education, even though it be confined to the merest rudiments; it is, in these days, an indispensable instrument of social advancement. Mental cultivation, moreover, is a good in itself. But we are convinced that, as a moral discipline, as a preventive of crime, its effects are, to say the least, much exaggerated. Mr. Smith, the governor of Edinburgh Gaol, speaking of the year ending 30th September 1846, says, "that the number of *recommitments* of those who can read well is much greater than the number of those who cannot read at all."† A teacher in a London ragged school, whose diary is quoted by Miss Carpenter, expresses himself to the same purport. "It is," he says, "apparently worse than useless to expect a man to be made better by merely learning to read and write. Those of our scholars who can do so best are decidedly the most depraved."‡

But want of education, it is often urged, is a cause of poverty; and from poverty a large portion of crime springs. There is a minimum of truth in this. Persons who can live in affluence do not ordinarily steal. There are few amateur thieves, we presume. But if it be meant that the majority of offenders are driven into

* Reformatory Schools, p. 28. † Ibid. p. 27. ‡ Ibid. p. 152.

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wrong-doing by sheer destitution, the statement is quite false. Of "the utterly destitute and unsheltered, the friendless and the fatherless," Mr. Clay says, that "it is very rarely they appear in the felon's dock."* "There are a large number of boys," says Miss Carpenter, "in our large cities who merely fall into the practice [of thieving] from sheer idleness, or from that love of enterprise so natural to boys, and often lauded in the children of gentlemen;—a few, *but comparatively few*, are driven to the practice by sheer destitution."† Of course a time will come when it will be a necessity for such boys either to steal or starve. They will, by patient continuance in wrong-doing, have precluded themselves from possibility of honest employment. But crime is not, in this case, the product of destitution, but destitution of the means of honest livelihood is the result of crime. Mr. Hill enumerates, as the three principal causes of delinquency—(1.) Bad training and ignorance; (2.) Drunkenness and other kinds of profligacy; (3.) Poverty.‡ "A great majority of offences," he says, "are committed by members of the poorest class; though it should be remarked, that this class is at the same time the most ignorant and the most intemperate." But is it not obvious that drunkenness and profligacy are in no other way original causes of crime than as they are sins? They are themselves but the first effects of the criminal dispositions which lead men, at last, to violate the rights of others and of society. The poverty of the ill-disposed classes is, Mr. Hill admits, generally accompanied by ignorance and drunkenness, which sufficiently account for it. Sentiment misleads many benevolent people on this matter. They visit the squalid abodes of our dangerous classes, and see them scheming future, and practising present, wickedness. They are struck with the filth, the noise, the details abhorrent to every sense and feeling. And they are led to consider the moral degradation they witness as the natural, if not the inevitable, effect of debasing outward circumstances. We do not deny, nor profess to be able to measure, their evil influence. But physical wretchedness is not a first cause; it has had a beginning, is an effect of something antecedent; and that something is, in nine cases out of ten, the very immorality for which it is made accountable. Comparatively few of the working classes who find their way into prison, says Mr. Hill, are skilled or well-paid labourers. The reason of this, though he overlooks it, is

* Reformatory Schools, p. 66. † Ibid. p. 71.

‡ He mentions also, (4.) Habits of violating the laws, engendered by the creation of artificial offences; (5.) Other measures of legislation interfering unnecessarily in private actions, or presenting examples of injustice; (6.) Temptation to crime, caused by the probability either of entire escape or of subjection to an insufficient punishment (p. 34). But these causes are now little operative.

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clear. To *have mastered* a difficult mechanical art is a proof of the pre-existence of qualities which are likely to keep a man out of gaol. Mr. Hill takes the sign and example of respectability for its cause.

But it cannot be denied, it will be said, that in times of scarcity, of dear food and slack employment, our prisons are invariably most crowded. Mr. Plint has an elaborate comparative table, exhibiting the price of wheat and the number of criminals, year by year, from 1805 to 1840. It certainly establishes a close connection between the two. In the paper of Professor Walsh, to which we have before referred, the years marked by increase of crime from 1844 to 1854 are shown to have been years of distress. But these results are not out of harmony with the opinions we have stated. There is always a class standing intermediate between the honest operative and the professional thief, uniting to some extent the avocations of both, which is the first to feel the pressure of scarcity. Its effect is to push them down into the rank of habitual criminals, to add to the number and extent of their depredations, and thereby of all depredations. Hard times do not generally make the hitherto honest vicious, but only the half-honest more vicious.

We have now endeavoured to show that, though increasing population, the aggregation of men into large masses within a small area, is a condition of things favourable to crime, yet the manufacturing system is not itself a demoralising agency, and that ignorance, and poverty, and drunkenness, are more frequently effects than causes of vice. The question remains, by whom the great bulk of offences in England is perpetrated? Mainly by professional malefactors, and the outcast and indolent portion of the working-classes. What is the time of life at which crime is most prevalent? Mr. Neison, in an article in the *Statistical Magazine*, October 1846, computes the number of offences perpetrated by persons between 15 and 30 to be 64 per cent of the whole. These 15 years are therefore by far the most guilty in man's life. In the year 1851 we find, from the census, that the number of persons committed in Great Britain was 31,961; of whom 6883, or nearly 25 per cent, were under 20 years of age. The whole population of Great Britain at the same date was 21,185,010, and the number of persons under 20 years of age 9,958,114, or nearly 50 per cent of all the inhabitants. By far the greater proportion of delinquents under 20 years of age are between 15 and 20. In 1846 those under 15 formed 6·5 per cent of the criminal population; those above 15 and below 20, 24·5 per cent. Mr. Plint estimates that in 1848 the percentage of persons in all England under 20 was 45·8, and the proportion of criminals 1 in 971; adults of 20 and under 25 years of age,

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9·7 per cent, the proportion of criminals being 1 in 262; persons 25 and under 30 years of age, 8 per cent, proportion of criminals 1 in 363; adults 30 and upwards, 36·5 per cent of the population, proportion of criminals, 1 in 753. The ratio of criminals to population, without distinction of age, in all England, was 1 in 641. Thus, of the 15 years of human life between 15 and 30, the greatest number of crimes is perpetrated during the first quinquenniad, the least during the last. Considering the length of time during which a delinquent may escape detection, and the large proportion which reconvictions form of all convictions, it is probable that of the adult offenders a large number were once juvenile offenders—that they did not first fall into sin in manhood. Hence it is of supreme importance to discover the general origin of juvenile offences—the circumstances under which they are ordinarily engendered. "Mr. Clay," said Lord Stanley, in his recent speech at Bristol, "found that in 75 per cent of the cases investigated by him, the fault of the children lay unmistakably at the door of the parents. In 57 per cent of these cases there had been habitual drunkenness, often accompanied by brutality, on the part of the father; in the remaining 18 per cent habitual indifference and neglect,—that is to say, in three cases out of every four of juvenile delinquency which came before him, the prisoner had had hardly a chance of becoming any thing but what he was. Mr. Clay's calculation is corroborated by another which we extract from an able and useful pamphlet by Mr. Adshead. He states that, from an inquiry made into the cases of 100 criminal children at Manchester, in 1840, the following results were elicited:

Born of dishonest parents	60
Parents profligate, but not of the criminal class . . .	30
Parents honest and industrious	10"*

Thus at least 10 per cent of juvenile crime is in spite of good home-influence. Allowing that out of the 90 per cent who have dishonest or profligate parents, the same proportion (10 per cent) would have turned out ill under happier circumstances, we find 19 per cent to be the amount of youthful delinquency which cannot be fairly attributed to evil training. This shows that, while direct dealing with the young will do much, it will not do all. The best reformatory is of little avail compared with a good home. Where the latter has failed, the former cannot be expected to succeed. Without taking into account those who first transgress the laws as men, the most sanguine must always reckon upon having criminals enough to prevent the problem of the

* *Times*, August 21, 1856.

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treatment of criminals ever growing obsolete, though industrial schools should receive all the *young* delinquents in the land. On this problem we must now say a very few words. Before we can decide *how* we shall punish, it is, or might seem to be, needful to determine the *aim* we ought to have in punishing.

Is that aim the reformation of the offender? or the prevention of crime? or the satisfaction of justice? Or are all these objects compatible, nay more, inseparable—*tria juncta in uno?* If they can be attained only in different degrees, according as one or the other of them is made paramount, which of them should have precedence? To these questions there are as many answers as there are possibilities of answer. The controversy they suggest is at least as old as the time of Plato and Aristotle, in whom we so often find our modern difficulties anticipated, if not resolved. The former insists upon amendment and example alone: "The wise man punishes not because wrong has been done, but in order that wrong may not be done." The latter recognises example also, substituting for amendment retribution, or, as he calls it, synallactic justice. Modern sympathies are on this point (though, for the most part, of course, with profound unconsciousness of their great ally) on the side of Plato. If punishments exert the utmost preventive effect on those who witness or are otherwise cognisant of them, and the maximum of reformatory influence on the criminal, what more, it is asked, can be desired? But the results, it should be remembered, which it is the completest success to have gained, are not always those at which we should deliberately aim, or which *can* be gained by so aiming. God has not made the conduct of human life, where the greatest interests are involved, dependent on nice calculations, and the adaptation of means to ends. In practice every one allows this. Health, and strength, and refreshment, are the bodily conditions which nutriment, and exercise, and repose, are designed to promote. But the *motive* to take food is hunger; to take rest, weariness. The valetudinarian, who keeps the ends we speak of in view, whose walks are "constitutionals," whose diet is a regimen, is surest to miss them. The urgency of appetite, the sense of repletion, are better monitors than the most artfully framed rules. God gives us instincts to guide us, and reason to correct the aberrations, or to moderate the excesses of those instincts, but not to usurp their place. The motive of punishment is the vindication of right, the infliction of "an evil of suffering" for "an evil of doing." The end is the removal, so far as may be, of occasions for future penalties. Men were not left to think out the philosophy of the matter before they could give the malefactor his due. Their sense of justice gave them true guidance, and secured advantages

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on which they did not speculate. In proportion as justice is done, as the penalty is made in kind and degree correspondent to the crime, is amendment likely to follow, and prevention of similar offences to be secured. If, however, reformation is exclusively aimed at, we believe it will ordinarily fail. If prevention is kept constantly in view, it will rarely be effected. It is impossible to compute the forces of human nature, more especially of *criminal* human nature, so as to predict the result when a new external force is applied, whether in the shape of a gaol chaplain or instructor, a treadmill, a solitary cell, or a public execution. It is not by experiment and induction, but by deeply-seated moral instincts, that the principle and scale of punishments should be determined. Details only are to be decided by considerations of supposed expediency. Merely deterring influences, moreover, most successfully contrived, would fall short of what punishment should accomplish, and would be likely to accomplish by a single eye to equitable retribution. To create a virtuous society is more than simply to keep men from breaking the laws. By frightening them enough you may do the latter. But fear is not a moral principle. Penalties should be of such a character as, roughly at least, to mirror the degree of guilt implied in the offences for which they are awarded, and, if possible, the *kind* of guilt also. The recognition not only of equality, but of a palpable analogy between the two, would help to bring out clearly the nature of the former, to impress its real character and enormity alike upon the sufferer and the public. Retribution in kind is the spontaneous dictate of social justice. Discrimination, too, well marked between shades of guilt, is the surest safeguard against the tendency of lesser delinquencies to prepare the way for greater. And as to know one's evil is the condition of turning from it, as repentance must come before reformation, we believe that retribution, which is a paying back,—if possible in the same coin,—would have an improving influence on the malefactor himself, as well as on those who are tending to his position.

These views, however, are in little favour at the present day. It is a growing habit to look upon the convict, not as a culpable person at all, but simply as an unfortunate one, who, so far from having any atonement to make for his past career, is rather in a position to require that atonement be made to him. If, as Lord Stanley seemed to imply in his Bristol speech, "circumstances" and "organisation" are the sole causes of crime, there is an end of all punishment, properly so called. The man did not create his own "circumstances;" or, if he did, he was but the instrument of other "circumstances" in so doing. As little is he the author of his own "organisation." Language involving the same

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doctrine was employed by Lord Brougham in his paper "On the Inefficiency of simply Penal Legislation." "The gaol," said his lordship, "must be considered as a moral hospital, and its inmates treated rather as patients than as criminals." The most hardened ruffians are but "uncured patients;" those whom common language harshly calls incorrigible scoundrels are simply confirmed invalids. We must not blame them, or do any thing but pity them, and carefully tend them in their affliction. We do not reproach a man for falling into a fever or a decline, or desert him when his case grows hopeless. To hang them would be as barbarous and inhuman as to smother a man labouring under hydrophobia, or to shoot down a leper. If these consequences are not allowed by the able and eminent persons we have named, it is only because their practical good sense vitiates their logic. Their use of medical language is a great abuse, justified only by a few flimsy and superficial analogies between crime and physical malady. Both are abnormal states. Both are contagious. Here the resemblance ceases. Bodily infection is independent of the will. In order to moral corruption, the will must consent to evil. It is not in a man's choice whether he will succumb to the cholera or to the plague. It is in his power to refrain from committing a murder, or breaking into a house. He can, if he likes, resist temptation. If the view of crime we are combating gains ground, the result will, we believe, be most baneful. It is impossible that your estimate of a man should not imprint itself on your demeanour to him, and speedily become legible to himself. If you regard him as the victim of an untoward lot, he will soon see that you so regard him, and will either despise and practise upon your weakness, or come gradually to form the same opinion of himself. This will infallibly prevent genuine amendment, to which, as we have said, contrition is essential. But how can he repent what he could by no means avoid? how could he help his "organisation?" Good minds, working a system founded on moral views so erroneous, may effect much good; but it is in its despite, and not by it. Happily, they *cannot* be true to it. And an inconsistent burst of indignation, or a gravity of rebuke, will at times break in with salutary effect upon the even tenor of their benignant laxity. Of course there is a mixture of truth in the errors (as we deem them) of this school, or they could never gain credence. It was the mistake of a previous generation to make no allowance for training and external agencies of corruption. But the reaction has been excessive. It is, in its way, however, an unconscious tribute to the principle of satisfaction to justice. Society feels that it is not without a share in the criminal's guilt, and would atone by making his punishment restorative.

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It would be very wrong to identify all the partisans of the amendment doctrine with the opinions just described. There are others, religious philanthropists, who plead for a reformatory discipline, not because they disbelieve, but because they intensely believe, in responsibility. The criminal is, to them, not a patient to be cured, but a soul to be saved. Their exertions, however, are directed not so much to remodel prison-rules as to supplement their deficiencies. When they confine themselves to this, they deserve only praise and imitation. Rigid justice from the state, compassion and kindly aid from private benevolence, is a combination most unexceptionable and most hopeful. But when those in authority forget that "to do justly" has precedence in the divine command over the obligation "to love mercy,"—nay, is the essential condition of real mercy,—only evil can follow, as the woeful results of Captain Maconochie's well-meant experiments in Norfolk Island bear startling testimony.

The class of offenders from whom it is most difficult to exact satisfaction to justice—in reference to whom it seems almost a mockery to utter so imposing a phrase—are juvenile delinquents. It is only in a very modified degree that we can ascribe to many among them a guilty intention. But it is going too far to say even of those whose ignorance is densest, whose surroundings have most completely shut out good influences, that in doing wrong they are wholly unaware of the wrong they are doing. Almost all of them have at least some obscure and fitful feeling, which, in their young and impressible minds, only requires clearing and developing to become abhorrence of crime. That this feeling may not die away, it must be seen to be shared by those teachers and others with whom they are brought into contact. Of course we are not arguing for the assumption of a tone towards them which shall make them think they are monsters of iniquity, but only for such an admixture of discipline with prevailing kindness, of reproof with encouragement, as shall echo upon them from without, more distinctly, the faint whisper of condemnation which they hear within their own minds. Guilt *expects* retribution; it will persuade itself that it is not guilt if it does not meet with it. Hence, we think, a short term of imprisonment should almost invariably precede admission into reformatory schools. This, it is objected, imprints a stigma upon the youthful convict. It imprints a stigma upon his past life; and that, for his own sake, is what is needed. It recognises as a fact, what it is affectation to seem politely ignorant of, —the lad's previous criminality. The arguments against imprisonment in the case of the young have weight only when he steps from the gaol directly into the world again, and not when

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there is interposed between the two a term of industrial training, extending over years, in a reformatory.

But, as we have already seen, juvenile delinquency, in the great majority of instances, must be attributed mainly to the sins of the parents. They, then, are the parties on whom punishment should fall most heavily. That others should maintain their offspring gratuitously is no punishment to them. It has, therefore, (by the act of 1854, amended in 1855) been made incumbent on them to defray a large proportion of the expenses incurred during the detention of their children. We do not see why the whole of the expenses, which would certainly not exceed the cost of the child's maintenance and education in freedom, should not, except good grounds of exemption can be shown, be exacted from them, under such penalties as may be fitted to enforce the demand. The justice of the existing measure, so far as it goes, cannot be denied. Its good effects, preventive and reformatory, have been proved. Even the involuntary discharge of neglected duties, the compulsory acknowledgment of human ties, has a tendency, paradox though it seems, to beget the affection whence those acts of duty ought spontaneously to have flowed. This is but the converse, the brighter side, of the profound truth, now become a hackneyed truism, which Tacitus expresses: *Proprium humani ingenii est, odisse quem læseris.* Mr. Dunne, the chief constable of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in a letter read in August at Bristol, before the Reformatory Union, notices the decrease of crime following on the establishment of reformatory schools in his town, and proceeds: "I have more particularly found that greater advantages emanated from those institutions, since the parents of the children confined in them have been made to pay contributions for their maintenance; for it appears beyond doubt, that the effect of the latter has been to induce the parents of other young criminals to withdraw them from the streets; and, instead of using them for purposes of crime, they seem to take an interest in their welfare; and I know that many of them are now really anxious to get such employment for their children as will enable them to obtain an honest livelihood; and it is my opinion that the example thus set to older and more desperate criminals, belonging, in many instances, to the same family as the juvenile thief, has had the effect of reforming them also, for many of them have left off their course of crime, and are now living by honest labour."

Even though these morally beneficial effects could not be discerned, society would have a right to demand that those who have lived upon it by pilfering shall not live on it while they are being trained to abstain from pilfering. And this opens a large

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question as to secondary punishments generally. The expenses for the maintenance of prisoners in England and Wales were, in 1853, 450,416*l.*, the number of prisoners being 109,083. In 1852, though the number of prisoners was *greater* by 5,645, the expenses were *less* by 15,254*l.** In 1853, the average total cost per head per annum was 26*l.* 19*s.* 8½*d.* The average earnings of each prisoner per annum were 2*l.* 1*s.* 5*d.*† On our present system, which is to substitute the separate confinement (partially or thoroughly carried out) of convicts for their aggregation in a mass or distribution in classes, the cost of their maintenance must yearly be larger, whatever reduction may take place in their numbers. The change, in spite of its immediate pecuniary disadvantages, is no doubt a change for the better. The old system, still subsisting in considerably more than a third of the gaols of England and Wales, and Ireland,‡ is not only unreformatory, but hideously demoralising. As it is no part of a man's punishment to send him into the world again more desperate and depraved than when he was taken from it, and therefore a greater danger to society; and as comparatively beneficial effects do flow from the new system, there is no doubt that we cannot revert to the old, whatever its apparent economical superiority. But is there no alternative? If it is equitable that parents should support their children while under legal sentence, it seems at least as equitable that the adult criminal should support himself. Under present arrangements, however, even in gaols adapted for industrial employments, he is far from doing so. The earnings of the prisoners during their term of separation, and during the period of associated labour which follows it, are too small to make any but the most trivial deduction from the cost incurred on their behalf. At Pentonville, in 1855, the total earnings of the convicts were 3,699*l.* The value of their *productive* labour was 916*l.* The total expenditure was 15,295*l.* Subtracting the value of the productive labour, the net expenditure is seen to be 14,379*l.*§ Now, if the first principle of retribution is restitution, if this is the very beginning and element of it, we obviously have but an imperfect retribution here. That the prisoner should repay the outlay on him during his confinement, that he should not be released, whatever his offence, till he has done this,—in many cases, of course, not even then,—is a plain dictate of justice. When theft is the crime for which he is incarcerated, the value of the property

* Nineteenth Report of the Inspectors of Prisons, p. 9.

† Ibid. pp. 246-7.

‡ See Returns on Separate Confinement, obtained last session by Lord Robert Cecil.

§ Reports of the Directors of Prisons for 1855, p. 9.

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stolen, or some proportion of it, ought to be added.* We are speaking now of what abstract right requires. To carry out its requisitions would necessitate a reconstruction of our present system, and an organisation of something like the "industrial regiments" which Mr. Carlyle recommends. We are glad to find the spirit of that distinguished writer's suggestion adopted in a quarter where his general views of the proper treatment of crime are not likely to meet with welcome. Mr. Frederic Hill says:

"There should be both agricultural and manufacturing prisons; and the manufacturing prisons should be constructed some for one kind of work and some for another. Thus there should be a prison where the chief employment is weaving, another, where it is shoemaking, another for blacksmiths and other workers in iron, and a mill for spinners."† "By an arrangement for removing a body of prisoners from place to place, large quantities of waste land might be brought into cultivation."‡

The objection, that such employment of prisoners would interfere with free labour, is hardly worth noticing. It is better that 100,000 men, and more, should support themselves, than be lodged and fed out of taxes levied from honest industry. They would not affect the labour-market to the same extent as if they were competing for employment out of prison, and multiplying the population. But would they work? The question has been practically answered. By the system of piece-work, and allowing the men to do overwork, on which a value was placed, to go in diminution of their term of sentence, or to furnish a fund for their support for a short time after their release, and in part to purchase small indulgences and alleviations of their condition, the most remarkable results were obtained in Bermuda, Australia, and elsewhere. The nature of the convicts seemed transformed; they laboured cheerfully and well.§ There is nothing in the latitude of England which should prevent similar effects from similar causes here. Indeed, they have been, to a considerable extent, obtained at Portland Prison.‖

We have advocated the measures indicated above, because they seem to meet a part of the moral requirements of punishment, to satisfy a fraction of the claims of justice, with an exactitude which is in no other way possible. In other respects we must be content with an approximation to the demerits of each convict, having no accurate or infallible criterion. But whatever penalties be

* See Hill on Crime, pp. 218-9. † Crime, p. 294.

‡ Ibid. p. 211.

§ See the testimony of Sir W. Denison, Captain Nelson, and others, quoted in the *Edinburgh Review*, July 1849, pp. 20, 21.

‖ In 1855 the value of labour there was 40,120*l*. The expenses amounted to 57,239*l*. Reports of the Directors of Convict Prisons, p. 110.

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inflicted, it is absolutely just that, while he is under sentence, he should work for his maintenance. And here again, we think, it may be shown that strict retribution best attains the other ends of punishment, deterrent example and amendment. Few persons, who can be influenced by considerations of the future at all, would not prefer labour in freedom, with absolute right to all its proceeds, to the certainty sooner or later of protracted labour in bondage, and without remuneration, under hardships and privations so great, that overwork is absolutely coveted as a favour, in order that by it a few scanty comforts and indulgences may be acquired. The indolence, which is so prolific a parent of crime, is most likely to be scared by such a prospect as this. That cheerful and strenuous labour, shown to be possible even under the conditions which have been laid down, would exert a most healthy moral influence, can hardly be doubted. It is most significant that *reformatory* schools, to secure their end of reformation, have been necessitated to become *industrial* schools also. The principle is the same whether juvenile or adult offenders are concerned. In the case of the latter, to say nothing of the good habits which regular toil would be likely to form, the feeling that they were, though under such humiliation, supporting themselves and paying a debt, would be likely to give them, in some feeble degree, the unwonted sensation of self-respect, which is necessary to all real moral restoration. The virtue engendered in separate confinement is likely to be of a morbid and artificial character,—a plant of hot-house growth, less able than that formed under more bracing conditions to stand exposure to the outer elements. We prefer, however, to rest on the obvious justice of some such arrangement as that proposed. However largely we may diminish, by various means, the number of criminals in England, there must always be many of them in so densely-populated a country. It is time to make provisions *en permanence* for turning them to the best account. Unless we are to have recourse to the formation of new penal colonies,—which we will not suppose,—we must keep them within our borders. This, we believe, can be safely done, if some such plans as those which have been suggested are set in vigorous operation. Questions of detail we cannot now touch upon. Before we conclude, however, we must devote a very few words to the subject of capital punishments.

If retribution is just,—they, inflicted as they now are only for murder, are just. We will not apologise to our readers for making no account of the declamation about the sanctity of human life, of which the advocates of their abolition are so fond. Human life *is* sacred,—and so is human *liberty*. But as we do not scruple to lock up a person who abuses the one, so neither need we scruple to dismiss from the world him who has made

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the foulest abuse of the powers of the other. He who has set at naught *all* human bonds, is best committed at once to the hands of God. Man can no longer deal with him. But we must confess that the satisfaction of justice, in this instance, does not appear to be accompanied by the effects which, in every other instance, seem to attend it. Of the reformation of the offender, we will say only this, that it seems to us to show a false philosophy, a superficial acquaintance with human nature, *altogether* and *always* to distrust the apparent penitence evinced by the culprit during the time which elapses between the sentence of death and its execution. Minds sunk to the lowest pitch of degradation can often only be reached by some such powerful shock as the anticipation of a speedy and violent death is calculated to produce. There are many instances of reformation, or conversion, call it which you will, effected by a sudden and appalling peril, when all other agencies had failed,—reformation proved by the after-life to be genuine. Why should it not be so in cases where his impending execution is presented to the thoughts of the guilty? It may often succeed,—there are strong grounds of analogy, as well as of positive evidence, for believing it does often succeed,—where nothing less could. It snaps all at once the ties which connect a man with the scenes and relationships of his past career, which are the strongest fetters of sin, convulses the soul, and directs its gaze to the future; creating, it may be, a susceptibility of more solemn hopes and fears than he has yet known.

We cannot dwell on these considerations; we can only summarily suggest them. But, it is said, the punishment of death does not prevent murder by others. Of all violent crimes, it alone is capital; and it alone is steadily increasing in England. But may not causes not essential to the punishment produce this effect? The foul exhibition of the culprit's death-struggles has a depraving tendency, which would be removed by making executions private, in conformity with the recent recommendation of a Committee of the House of Lords. The uncertainty of the punishment, owing to the capricious manner in which the royal prerogative of commuting the sentence is exercised by those who wield the Queen's authority, must have a pernicious influence. The unwillingness of juries to convict, where a life is at stake, is another prejudicial circumstance. This shows, it will be said, that the punishment is out of harmony with popular sentiments, and such punishments should be abolished. But it is a dangerous policy for a government to lower the standard of right to the laxity of the age. Rather ought it to elevate the popular morality to the true standard of right, by persistence in it. And it should be regarded, surely, as a more awful thing to affix the

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stigma of murder upon a man than to deprive him of the existence which becomes a curse under such an imputation. Whom you dare not put to death for any crime,—admitting that death is its proper penalty,—you ought as little to dare to pronounce guilty of that crime. It is impossible to give back a life which has been wrongly sacrificed. It is equally impossible to give back the years which have been spent in unjust imprisonment, to revive the hopes which have been blighted, to open out again the career that has been closed, or restore the energetic spirit which alone can pursue it. These considerations are, we think, of some weight in counterbalancing the strong arguments that may be urged on the other side: we will not say, we do not feel prepared to say, of how much weight. In this, as in all other matters relating to punishment, or indeed aught else, our effort must be to discover what right demands, and then to do it unwaveringly. Our concern is not, except in a secondary degree, with consequences. They are ordered by a higher Power. But we may learn from them; for when they go wrong, it is a sign that we have erred. *Fiat justitia, ruat cœlum*,—"Let justice be done, though the sky should fall,"—represents the true spirit of human conduct. But to do justice is the best way to prevent the falling of the sky.

Art. III.—VICTOR COUSIN ON MADAME DE HAUTEFORT AND HER CONTEMPORARIES.

Madame de Longueville. Etudes sur les Femmes illustres et la Société du XVII^e^ Siècle. Par M. Victor Cousin. Troisième édition. 8vo. Paris, 1855.

Madame de Sablé. Par M. Victor Cousin. 8vo. Paris, 1854.

Madame de Hautefort et Madame de Chevreuse. Par M. Victor Cousin. 2 tom. 8vo. Paris, 1856.

There is nothing comparable for moral force to the charm of truly noble manners. The mind is, in comparison, only slightly and transiently impressed by heroic actions, for these are felt to be but uncertain signs of a heroic soul; nothing less than a series of them, more sustained and varied than circumstances are ever found to demand, could assure us, with the infallible certainty required for the highest power of example, that they were the faithful reflex of the ordinary spirit of the actor. The spectacle

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of patient suffering, though not so striking, is more morally impressive; for we know that

> "Action is transitory—a step, a blow,
> The motion of a muscle, this way or that—
> 'Tis done; and, in the after vacancy,
> We wonder at ourselves like men betray'd:
> Suffering is permanent, obscure, and dark,
> And has the nature of infinity."

The mind, however, has a very natural repugnance to the sustained contemplation of this species of example, and is much more willingly persuaded by a spectacle precisely the reverse—namely, that of goodness actually upon the earth triumphant, and bearing in its ordinary demeanour, under whatever circumstances, the lovely stamp of obedience to that highest and most rarely-fulfilled commandment, "Rejoice evermore." Unlike action or suffering, such obedience is not so much the way to heaven, as a picture, say rather a part, of heaven itself; and truly beautiful manners will be found upon inspection to involve a continual and visible compliance with that apostolical injunction. A right obedience of this kind must be the crown and completion of all lower kinds of obedience. It is not compatible with the bitter humiliations of the habit of any actual sin; it excludes selfishness, since the condition of joy, as distinguished from pleasure, is generosity, and a soul in the practice of going forth from itself; it is no sensual partiality for the "bright side" of things, no unholy repugnance to the consideration of sorrow; but a habit of lifting life to a height at which all sides of it become bright, and all moral difficulties intelligible: in action it is a salubrity about which doctors will not disagree; in the countenance it is a loveliness about which connoisseurs will not dispute; in the demeanour it is a lofty gentleness, which, without pride, patronises all the world, and which, without omitting the minutest temporal obligations or amenities, does every thing with an air of immortality. When Providence sets its inheritors upon a hill where they cannot be hid, acknowledging, as it were, their deserts by conferring upon them conspicuous fortune and corporeal advantages, and proving them by various and splendid opportunities, the result is an example to which, as we have said, there is nothing else to be compared in the way of moral agency; a spectacle so clear in the demonstration of human majesty and loveliness, that the honouring of it with love and imitation is the only point of worship upon which persons of all countries, faiths, customs, and morals, are in perfectly catholic agreement. For the benefit of a single such example it were scarcely possible that the world could pay too dearly. Monarchy and aristocracy have nothing to fear from the arguments of their opponents so long as democracies have

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failed to produce a Sidney or a Bayard, a Lady Rachel Russell or a Madame de Hautefort.

It is far from our intention to imply that the loveliest blossoms of humanity appear, like the flowers of the aloe, at centenary intervals, and then only in kings' gardens. We are not allowed to doubt but that the poor and suffering most often are what "the rich should be, right-minded;" and that they therefore, more frequently than the rich, have the foundation of right manners. Nevertheless, spiritual loveliness when found in conspicuous places, and "clothed upon" with extraordinary personal and intellectual gifts, while it is more impressive than humble worth in the sight even of the best, as being exposed to subtler temptations to deny itself, is made visible to many who would refuse to acknowledge the same lustre were it shining in a dark place, and is more imposing to all, not only because all are naturally delighted with the extraordinary occurrence of harmony between the apparently hostile realms of grace and nature, fortune and desert, but also because such harmony explains, exalts, and really completes its seemingly-opposed elements, and grace, expressing itself with thorough culture and knowledge of the world, becomes natural, and nature, instructed in its true perfection, gracious. Moreover, fine manners are always more or less an art, and this art is one which the poor and socially obscure have no means of bringing to perfection: their lives may be purified in the furnace of affliction, and worked by the blows of circumstance into the finest temper; faith and resignation may give evenness, and love a certain lustre to their demeanour; but the last touch, which is that which polishes the mirror, and tells more in the eyes of the world than all the rest, is the work of art. And, let it be acknowledged, none of the fine arts is so fine as that of manners, and, of all, it is probably the only one which is cultivated in the next world as well as in this, where also it is, like its sisters, immortal; for the contagion of fine manners is irresistible, and wherever the possessor of them moves, he leaves behind him lovers and imitators who indefinitely, if not infinitely, propagate his likeness. Unlike the lower arts of poetry, music, architecture, and painting, which may be regarded as secondary and derivative from this primary art of good manners, which imitates nothing but God; unlike these arts, in which men have always been the most excellent professors, that of fine manners has been carried to its highest perfection by women. Than some of these, in whom station, beauty, wit, and holiness, have been united, it seems scarcely possible that the angels themselves should shine with a more bright and amiable lustre.

Women, not to speak of their beauty, their docile and self-adaptive natures, and that inherent aptitude for goodness which

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makes devotion their chief intemperance, enjoy, in their privilege of subordination to men a vast advantage for the development of the noblest manners. Obedience is the proper perfection of humanity; fine manners are the expression of that perfection; and that obedience and consequent perfection are likely to be frequent and complete in proportion as the object to which submission is directly due is near and comprehensible. Remote and incomprehensible Deity is the "head of the man;" and his obedience to that vast and invisible authority, though of a loftier nature, is necessarily incomplete in its character and indistinct in its expression, when compared with the submission of the woman to the image of the same authority in himself. While the one obeys from faith, the other does so from sight; and the sensible "*beauty* of holiness" is therefore almost exclusively the prerogative of the woman. The light of her duty strikes directly upon that to which it is relative, and is reflected back in loveliness upon herself; while his appears to be lost in the space it has to traverse to its object. Here is a great spiritual distinction of sex, which those who reject the doctrine of subordination confound and destroy; pulling down the majesty of man by abolishing his principal responsibility, and turning the peculiar strength and glory of the woman into weakness and disgrace.

There was one place and time singular in the history of the world for the development of the woman's character to the extreme limit of her capacities in various directions. The court of France in the reign of Louis XIII., the regency of Anne of Austria, and the early part of the reign of Louis XIV., produced a company of ladies, in whose presence all the remaining tract of history looks dim. The wars of the League had left the great nobles of France in the enjoyment of an amount of personal freedom, importance, and dignity, greater than was ever, before or since, the lot of any aristocracy. Chivalrous traditions; the custom of appeal to arms for the settlement of personal quarrels, a custom which is said to have cost the country some nine hundred of its best gentlemen in about as many years; the worship of womanhood carried to a pharisaical strictness of observance, were conditions which, though socially disastrous in various ways, exalted the individual "*valeur*" of men to the most imposing height, and rendered a corresponding exaltation imperative upon the women, in order to secure that personal predominance which it is their instinct to seek. The political state of France was one which afforded the members of its court extraordinary occasions for the display of character. That state was one of a vast transition. Feudal privileges had to be either moderated, defined and constitutionalised, or else destroyed. The revolution which was about to operate in England and to end in liberty, was already

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working in France with a manifestly opposite destiny. Richelieu and Mazarin were slowly and surely bringing about an absolute despotism, as the only solution of the political difficulties of the state consistent with its greatness, and, probably, even with its unity. The opposition of the nobles to the diminution of their power was carried on with far greater boldness and grandeur of personal effect, inasmuch as it was done without directly affronting the monarchical authority in the persons of its weak representations, Louis XIII. and Anne of Austria. The two great ministers were the objects against which the whole wrath of the nobility was directed. Hence the war against encroaching monarchy was in great part waged in the court itself; and the king and the queen-regent were themselves found from time to time in the ranks of the indignant aristocracy. Here, then, was a wonderful field for individual effect; and that field was open to women no less, or even more, than to men: for the struggle, indeed, on the part of the latter was, upon the whole, a selfish and ignoble one; no national idea inspired it; every one was for himself and his house; and the women were perfectly able to sympathise and assist in quarrels of this personal and intelligible interest. Richelieu and Mazarin were moreover exactly the kind of enemies to excite the peculiar hostility, and prove the peculiar talents of women. In their modes of thought and action, these ministers were too much like women not to be naturally obnoxious to their hatred. In these days, too, rose Port-Royal, with its female reformers, saints, and theologians, offering an asylum to weary and repentant worldliness and passion, or a fresh field for vanity which had exhausted its ordinary irritants. On every side lay great temptations and great opportunities; and the women of the period seem to have been endowed with singular qualifications for the illustration of both.

M. Victor Cousin has presented us with three excellent portraits of women of this time—Madame de Chevreuse, Mademoiselle de Hautefort, and Madame de Longueville; the volume professing to be an account of Madame de Sablé, being in fact a continuation of the *Jeunesse* of Madame de Longueville. Madame de Sablé herself was, to our minds, the most insipid of heroines, and we are quite at a loss to account for the enthusiasm professed for her by M. Cousin, from whom, indeed, we very widely differ as to the relative degrees of admiration in which the several ladies he portrays ought to be held. We are astonished by the genius of Madame de Chevreuse for political intrigue, and admire the animal courage displayed by her in her merited misfortunes; we see nothing particularly charming in the youth of Madame de Longueville, or admirable in the medley of passion and vanity which made her the heroine of the Fronde,

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though we sincerely pity her sufferings from the cowardly conduct of La Rochefoucauld towards her, and are very glad to find that in the end she grows heartily sorry for her misdoings; for Madame de Sablé, we repeat that we care as little as we possibly can for an inoffensive lady; but for Mademoiselle de Hautefort we profess an admiration which knows no bounds, and which we shall endeavour to instil into our readers. We cannot preface a sketch of this noble lady's character and career more effectually than by a glance at those of the Duchesses de Longueville and de Chevreuse.

Madame de Chevreuse was a zealous politician, without for a moment ceasing to be a woman. Her motive was always love, "ou plutôt," as M. Cousin, with a kind of discrimination unusual in a Frenchman, says, "la galanterie." Had she been able so far to deny her sex as to entertain a national object, or even a steady project of personal ambition, she would have wanted nothing to render her the equal of Richelieu, or at least of Mazarin. As it was, she made herself the most redoubtable enemy of both. Richelieu worked indefatigably to win her to his side; failing, was compelled to send her time after time into exile; and, in giving from his deathbed directions for the political conduct of Louis XIII., declared that her continued banishment was one of the prime conditions of peace and security. The private memoranda and confidential letters of Mazarin, many of which are published by M. Cousin for the first time, bear continual testimony to the importance which he attached to this lady's movements. Reconciled with her during the Fronde, he paid practical respect to her advice in matters of state, which at this period were always matters of intrigue; and when, in 1660, Louis de Haro congratulated the cardinal upon his complete political success, and the repose which he and France might henceforward hope to enjoy, the minister replied, "You Spaniards may think so; your women mix themselves up only with love-affairs: but it is not so with us; we have three amongst us who are quite capable of governing or of overturning three great kingdoms—the Duchess de Longueville, the Princess Palatine, and the Duchess de Chevreuse."

At an early age Madame de Chevreuse became the favourite of Anne of Austria, and occupied a high position in her court. They were of the same age; and the queen, neglected by her husband and oppressed by Richelieu, found amusement and counsel—not always, it is to be presumed, of the safest—from the gay and subtle duchess. In 1625 Lord Rich, afterwards Lord Holland, was deputed to the court of France to ask the hand of Henrietta, the sister of Louis XIII., for the Prince of Wales. The Englishman was young and handsome; pleased

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Madame de Chevreuse, and engaged her in English interests. This was her début in love and politics. Her first visit to England was in the escort of Henrietta. The next authentic lover of this lady was the famous Chalais, who suffered on the scaffold for a conspiracy, of which the real object is to this day doubtful. Madame de Chevreuse was exiled for her association in this affair. She departed from the brilliant court with vows of vengeance, which she religiously remembered. She asked permission to go to England, where Holland, Buckingham, and Charles I. were her friends. This, unluckily for Richelieu, was refused, and Lorraine fixed upon for her place of banishment. She at once made a conquest of the Duke Charles IV., at that time the ally of Austria. The duchess succeeded in extending the league to England and Savoy. This coalition was dissolved by the fall of Rochelle; and, in negotiating peace, Charles I. made the return of the duchess to France one of its most pressing conditions. Richelieu consented, much against his inclination; and the lady returned, to add the astute minister himself to the number of those who were subdued by her personal charms, at that time in all their splendour. But, to the credit of Madame de Chevreuse as a woman, let it be said, that she always made her politics subservient to her *liaisons*, and never these to her politics. She scorned to feign even a friendship which she did not feel, and boldly preferred Chateauneuf to the position which seems at this time to have been sought by his all-powerful master. Chateauneuf had committed himself to the service of Richelieu, and had been rewarded by him with the government of Touraine and a high official position in the court. He conceived for Madame de Chevreuse a passion of which a man at fifty is usually supposed to be incapable; and the devotion of the lady, though younger by nearly twenty years, was not less sincere and entire. The cardinal soon perceived a change in his confidential minister, and discerned its cause; and many letters from the duchess to her lover are filled with accounts of the cardinal's jealousy of and anxiety to prevent their intercourse. These letters are of great interest, and bear traces of that grandeur of mind which was at this time a kind of moral tradition among the French nobility, and which nothing but a combination of the vices of the period with extreme vulgarity of nature, as in Madame de Montbazon, could obscure. Love and accordance with the laws of society are the conditions of a true alliance between man and woman; but in almost every age one or other of those conditions seems to have been regarded practically as non-essential. In the days of chivalry, which was not yet over in the time of Madame de Chevreuse, love was looked upon by most persons as all in all; just as legality is now. We do not venture to say

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which ought to be condemned as the worst mistake. The following paragraph from one of these letters will sufficiently indicate the tone which it was possible, in the early part of the seventeenth century, for a woman sincerely to maintain, under conditions which, in later days, would be far too morally depressing to allow of such a style: "Je vous conseille, ne pouvant pas encore dire que je vous commande, et ne voulant plus dire que je vous prie, de porter le diamant que je vous envoye, afin que voyant cette pierre, qui a deux qualités, l'une d'être ferme, l'autre si brillante qu'elle parait de loin et fait voir les moindres défauts, vous vous souveniez qu'il faut être ferme dans vos promesses pour qu'elles me plaisent, et ne point faire de fautes pour que je n'en remarque point." The defection of Chateauneuf, and the inveterate, though always courteously-conducted, hatred of Madame de Chevreuse towards Richelieu, enraged the haughty minister, who, seeing that conciliation was impossible, banished her again, first to one of her *terres* near Paris, and afterwards to Touraine; where she remained four years, and relieved her ennui by getting up a mysterious correspondence between the queen, Charles IV. of Lorraine, Henrietta of England, and the King of Spain. Richelieu made this correspondence with the enemies of France the ground of the most serious accusations against Madame de Chevreuse and the queen; and, in fact, it seems certain that it was of a more or less treasonable character. The queen was greatly humiliated, but nothing could be brought home to her intriguing friend. An erroneous signal, however,—a Book of Hours sent to the latter by the queen's *dame d'atours*, Madame de Hautefort, bound in red instead of green,—was taken as an intimation that flight was necessary; and the adventurous duchess escaped into Spain on horseback and in male attire, after various rencontres, which demanded all the extraordinary courage and presence of mind of which she was mistress. Philip IV. received the friend of his sister with all demonstrations of honour, and it is said that he himself enlarged the list of her conquests. Finding correspondence with France almost impossible, she passed from Spain into England, at that time neutral, and received the warmest welcome from Charles I., Henrietta, and a number of her old friends at the court. Here her pecuniary resources became exhausted; she was soon involved in heavy debt; and, weary of exile under circumstances so painful to her pride, she opened negotiations with Richelieu for her return. The minister hoped to make use of her influence with the Duke of Lorraine, dreaded the effects of the free exercise of her powers in a foreign country, and gladly treated with her through Boispille and the Abbé du Dorat. The spectacle of this negotiation, which lasted for more than a year, and was after all abortive, is a

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curious one. All the cunning of Richelieu was exhausted in persuading her into his power. The duchess was his match, and refused to return without fuller guarantees than the minister chose to give for her personal safety from the results of any criminating information regarding her past conduct, which might possibly be in his possession; and subsequent warnings from the Duke of Lorraine, and from Anne of Austria herself, confirmed Madame de Chevreuse in her suspicions that Richelieu, under forms of courtesy, and even kindness, was preparing her destruction. This truce at an end, Madame de Chevreuse renewed with redoubled zeal her active hostility against the cardinal. The Duke de la Valette, summoned to take his trial before one of those unconstitutional and tyrannical commissions which were the chief scandal of Richelieu's administration, fled to England, and, through the intercession of the exiled duchess with Charles I., was received at the court, to the justifiable indignation of the practical ruler of France. The duchess became the head of an active and powerful faction of emigrants, who maintained a strict intelligence with the cabinet of Madrid, and made themselves a source of continual danger and anxiety to Richelieu. In 1641 we find Madame de Chevreuse at Brussels, and acting as the bond of communication between England, Spain, and Lorraine. Subsequently she was associated with the Count de Soissons and Cinq Mars in their attempts against Richelieu. The Queen of France, charged again with participation in the anti-ministerial intrigues, sacrificed her faithful ally, the duchess, to ingratiate herself with the all-powerful cardinal, and insisted upon her continued exclusion from France. At this time the fortunes of Madame de Chevreuse were at their worst; her enemy was triumphant; her friends traitorous or weak; her resources exhausted; her return to France, her children, and her possessions, apparently hopeless. Richelieu died; and Louis XIII., who, during his short survival was faithful to his minister's policy, quickly followed him, leaving in his will an especial clause against Madame de Chevreuse and her friend Chateauneuf, for whom so much had been suffered and undertaken by her. The continued banishment of the one, and imprisonment of the other, were declared to be matters of state necessity; but within a few days of the death of the king, the provisions of this document were revised or rejected by the Parliament, Anne declared regent without the control of a council, Chateauneuf came forth from his prison, and his faithful mistress the duchess returned to France, bold in the hope that she and the ancient Garde des Sceaux would henceforth be to the queen what Richelieu had been to Louis XIII. But the duchess had not made her calculations with her usual skill; she had made allowance neither for the

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change which ten years of the hard discipline of circumstances had necessarily wrought upon the queen, nor for the still greater change which the imposition of a new and great responsibility is apt to bring about in moral character. Anne, though destined ever, as a woman, to be the subject of personal, was no longer the slave of petty influence. The splendid and powerful monarchy which Richelieu had half created was too precious a possession to be frittered away for the gratification of the few great heads of houses who still maintained the pretensions which Richelieu had worked so long and so effectually to subdue. Anne received back her old favourite with courtesy, but without warmth; and it was not long before the duchess discovered that Richelieu had left an heir to his power in the person of Mazarin. The duchess at the time of her return knew little or nothing of Mazarin; but Mazarin knew her very well, and at once comprehended the necessity of refusing her any share with himself in the queen's confidence. His policy, however, was always subtle and conciliatory, and it was some time before Madame de Chevreuse gave up her cherished hope of exalting Chateauneuf to the supreme conduct of affairs. Chateauneuf was not her only protégé; and in proportion as the prospect of succeeding in advancing him diminished, she grew bolder in the espousal of the cause of the nobles, who had been the enemies of Richelieu and of the integrity of the monarchical power, and who now began to find in Mazarin a scarcely less formidable opponent. At a time when all was external civility and even gallantry between Mazarin and the duchess, the discerning and well-informed minister makes a memorandum to the effect that "mes plus grands ennemis sont les Vendôme et Mme. de Chevreuse." Innumerable sentences equally explicit remain, in the handwriting of Mazarin, to show that he regarded her as the head of the "Importants," whose squabbles and intrigues were about to be developed into the tragi-comedy of the Fronde. The object at first proposed by the party was to supplant the influence of Mazarin with the queen; and this proving hopeless,—for the connection of Anne and her minister was soon recognised for something far stronger than a political one,—they proposed to deal with him in a more summary manner; and the reality of the conspiracy of the Importants to assassinate the minister, together with the part taken in it by Madame de Chevreuse, are points which M. Cousin's researches and reasonings establish beyond doubt. Mazarin, assisted by fortune and a miraculously effective system of *espionage*, turned the machinations of his enemies to his own account, and forced the queen-regent to invest him with absolute authority to deal with his enemies as he chose. The consequence was the arrest of the Duke de Beaufort, and the dispersion of the conspi-

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rators who were openly implicated. Madame de Chevreuse ventured to present herself at court the very day after the attempted assassination had failed; but, on the arrest of Beaufort, the queen courteously intimated to her that, although she believed her innocent of the designs of the prisoner, it would be as well that she should quietly retire first to her house at Dampierre, and afterwards to Touraine, whither Chateauneuf had himself been "invited" to retire. There the indefatigable lady continued her intrigues against the minister with undiminished vigour, and was soon ordered to take up her abode at Angoulême. At this place there was a state prison, in which Chateauneuf had been confined for ten years for her sake. Dreading lest this order implied something worse than banishment, she once more determined on flight from France. After many adventures and hardships, she reached the Spanish Netherlands, and made Liège for a time her headquarters, whence she kept up an extensive correspondence, and laboured to maintain and improve the alliance between Austria, Spain, and Lorraine, upon which the last hopes of her party rested. Mazarin did all he could to detach Charles IV. of Lorraine from this league; but his plans were successfully combated by the duchess. The storm which now burst forth in the Fronde may almost be considered to have been of her raising; for, besides herself, and until the accession to the party of the great Condé and his sister the Duchess de Longueville, it boasted of no leader of real power; its ostensible head, the Duke de Beaufort, being a person wholly incapable of managing the intrigues into which he plunged, and of which he fancied himself to be the soul. We have neither space nor inclination to follow this wonderful woman through the Fronde. At its commencement she was nearly fifty years old, and during its course she seems for the first time to have begun to think of her own and her family's interests. Hitherto her hates and her loves had ruled her, to the exclusion of all other considerations. She vacillated for some time between Mazarin and Condé, to whose brother, the Prince de Conti, she hoped to marry her daughter Charlotte; but finally the errors of Condé showed her where fortune was likely to settle, and she ended by concluding a sincere alliance with her old but faithless friend Anne and her enemy Mazarin. The Duc de Chevreuse dying in 1657, the duchess, then nearly sixty, married the last of her many lovers, the Marquis de Laignes; and, having outlived all who had interested her, Richelieu and Mazarin, Louis XIII. and Anne of Austria, Chateauneuf and the Duke of Lorraine, her first lover Lord Holland, and her latest De Laignes, it is said that she became "dévote." At all events, she ended her days in a tranquillity and a retirement according much better with her age than with her antecedents.

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Such is the outline of the life of this extraordinary woman. The moral is almost too obvious to be dwelt upon. She was not a bad woman: as the times went, she ought rather to be looked upon as the reverse; her *liaisons* were irregular, but not vulgar; her passions were violent, but not low, for they could suffer the prolonged absence of their object without changing or expiring; her friendships were sincere and constant; and even in her hostilities she displayed a natural loyalty which rendered them respectable; her energy and courage in action, her cheerfulness and spirit in adversity, were unsurpassed; and if her moral constitution, upon the whole, was thus at worst but mediocre, her talents were astonishing. Of how many of the men who have done great services, and made great figures in the world, could more than this be said? Madame de Chevreuse had, indeed, all the qualities of a great man but one, and that was the power of acting from other than personal interests. She was a woman with an extraordinary endowment of every intellectual faculty consisting with womanhood; but she could not reject her nature, which was to be subordinate, if not gracefully by submission of will, then disgracefully by wayward devotion of passion; and, as if to point the moral more sharply, to men inferior to herself in every quality but—*manhood*. Insubordinate in her very love, she insisted upon serving her friends and paramours in her own way and not in theirs, and the consequence was that La Rochefoucauld could with justice accuse her of having injured all with whom she was in any way connected.

The character and career of Madame de Longueville were too much like those of Madame de Chevreuse to be described by us at any length. We can only direct attention to those points in which the characteristics of the first were the complement of those of the last—the two taken together making one complete illustration of what womanhood is when diverted from its sphere and vocation. The faults of Madame de Longueville, if not so many or so grave as those of Madame de Chevreuse, were, to our thinking, far more disagréeable. If the perversion of a woman's perfections is painful to behold, much more so is that of her peculiar and, in their sphere, permissible defects. Great beauty, wit, and courage, were in both ladies diverted from their proper uses; but woman's personal vanity, which charms our masculine prejudices when it is in moderation and employed about her own personal attractions, is above all other things repulsive when it mocks a masculine ambition, and pretends to an interest in abstract principles of science, politics, and theology. We confess that Madame de Chevreuse conspiring the death of Mazarin is not nearly so offensive to our nerves as Madame de Longueville in either of the comparatively innocent positions of précieuse-in-

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chief at the Maison Rambouillet, criticising the couplets of Voiture; of generalissimo of the Fronde, giving directions to and receiving homages from crowds of dilettanti rebels at the Hôtel de Longueville; or of doctor of divinity at Port-Royal, disputing Jansenist points with the graceful *gourmande* Madame de Sablé. Her *liaison* with the selfish but magnificently showy La Rochefoucauld may reasonably be suspected of having had for its motive as much of worldly vanity as passion; and his conduct after its termination moves us more with contempt for him than pity for her. No woman, deserving such praises as are lavished by M. Cousin upon Madame de Longueville, could ever have been won to the sacrifice of her virtue and reputation by the cold trickster which the author of the *Maximes*, with inconceivable moral fatuity, declares himself, in his Memoirs, to have been in regard to her. Vexed with Mazarin and the queen at not succeeding in obtaining from them a certain purely formal court precedence, which he had no right whatever to expect, he tells us that he determined upon revenge; saw that Condé must be made the chief instrument of it, and that he was to be won from his loyalty only through his sister, Madame de Longueville, to whom he was tenderly attached. We translate from his *Mémoires*,—which, with incredible baseness, he allowed to circulate during the life of his late mistress, and with falsehood and cowardice disavowed when he began to find what *men* thought of him, and how they were likely to act towards him,—the passage in which this *soi-disant* Bayard chuckles over his villany:

"The beauty of Madame de Longueville, her intellect, and her various personal charms, attached to her all who could hope to be tolerated by her. She was at this time so united with her family, and so tenderly loved by the Duc d'Enghien, her brother, that to please her was to possess his friendship. Many persons tried this way in vain, and mixed their ambition with other sentiments. Miossens, since Marshal of France, persevered long, but with no success. I was one of his particular friends, and he told me his designs. He feigned hopes which he did not and could not really feel. So some time passed, until at last I had reason to believe that I could make a better use than he of the attachment and confidence of Madame de Longueville. I convinced him that this was the case, but assured him that consideration for him would always withhold me from forming an attachment (*prendre des liaisons*) with Madame de Longueville unless I had his consent. I even confess that I purposely embittered his mind towards her; without, however, saying any thing that was not the truth. He gave her up to me entirely; but he repented when he saw the results of this *liaison*."

The writer of this passage, in his anxiety to obtain credit for profound cunning, seems to have overlooked the inevitable con-

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clusion that either this account, or the boast he loved to make while the "attachment" in question was going on, that

> 'Pour mériter son cœur, pour plaire à ses beaux yeux,
> J'ai fait la guerre aux rois, je l'aurais faite aux dieux,'

was a *lie*. As to which of the boasts was the best founded, there cannot be much doubt. We repeat, that we cannot entertain any very exalted admiration for a woman who could give herself to such a man under *any* circumstances, far less under conditions of feeling which would allow of her subsequent light-minded infidelity with the Duc de Nemours, whereby even La Rochefoucauld was provoked to a resentment deeper than should have been dictated by his worldly interests.

"But now," says M. Cousin, in commencing his life of Madame de Hautefort, after having finished that of Madame de Chevreuse,—"now we have to describe a very different person; one who will lead us among the same events, but who will carry thither a wholly different character. She appears as the enemy, but not the rival of Richelieu; her life does not belong to political history; she does not dispute the government of France with the two great cardinals, she only refuses to betray for them her friends and her cause; her cause being, or at least always appearing to her to be, that of religion and virtue." It is always thus. A noble woman is only to be praised by negatives, all positive commendations sounding gross and partial beside her delicate and elaborate loveliness.

Marie de Hautefort was born in 1616, and was soon after left an orphan and committed to the charge of her grandmother, Madame de la Flotte Hauterive. Her early years were passed in the country; but there was much talk of the court and its pleasures at her grandmother's house; and the beautiful and intellectual girl, at eleven years of age—then almost a woman in figure—and then and always too innocent to have any element of asceticism in her sincere piety, offered fervent prayers to Heaven to be allowed to—*go to court!* Madame de la Flotte had affairs which brought her to Paris; Marie went with her, and made such an impression, that the queen-mother, Mary de Medicis, at once placed her among her maids-of-honour. Though but twelve years of age, her manners were distinguished by that "très grand air, tempéré par une retenue presque sévère," which to the last continued to be the quality of her chaste and noble loveliness. Her beauty of person must have been of the very loftiest kind, if we may judge from the careful reproduction of an authentic portrait which accompanies the Life, and from the effect which she immediately produced in the most brilliant and fastidious court in the world. She had the name of Aurora given to her, as de-

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scriptive of her fresh and innocent splendour. When she was fourteen the king fell in love with her. He took her away from the queen-mother, and placed her with the queen-consort, who at first was naturally somewhat shy of a maid-of-honour who was manifestly a rival. But Anne soon discovered in Mademoiselle de Hautefort a mind from which she had nothing to dread. As for the *affections* of the king, Anne enjoyed too little of them at any time to care much for the platonic alliance which she saw plainly was the worst she had to fear; she soon found also that her misfortunes and neglect constituted a much more powerful claim to the noble girl's attachment than the power and prestige of the greatest monarch in the world. Thus the favourite of the king enjoyed the singular distinction of being at the same time scarcely less the favourite of his wife. The first public mark of attention from the king to the maid-of-honour was on occasion of a sermon, at which the queen and the court were present. The maids-of-honour, according to custom, were seated on the ground. The king sent the velvet, on which he was kneeling, for Mademoiselle de Hautefort to sit upon. She blushed with confusion, obeyed a sign from the queen to take it, but placed it by her side. Such a mixture of modesty and tact was not unappreciated in the court of France. On another occasion an incident occurred which will serve to explain how the position of Mademoiselle de Hautefort was one against which not the slightest exception could be taken, a little allowance being made for the liberal manners of the seventeenth century. The king entered the apartment of the queen as she and her maid-of-honour were discussing a note, containing something that it was not desired that the king should see. He pressed very much to obtain it, and Mademoiselle de Hautefort found it impossible to keep the queen's secret except by placing the paper in her bosom. This at once terminated the dispute; although in M. Cousin's version of the story—which is not the one we have adopted as the most probable—the queen in jest held the hands of the beautiful girl, and dared the king to take the letter from its sanctuary. Though the religion of Louis, and his reverence for this noble lady, prevented him from affronting her with his passion, his extreme jealousy was a source of continual annoyance to her; and many a time the pride of the good and gay young beauty resented the assiduities and pretensions of an *amitié* which had no right to such exclusiveness, and no foundations for such suspicions; for, with several of the noblest gentlemen of France at her feet, Mademoiselle de Hautefort's heart was untouched. After these misunderstandings with his "friend," Louis would sit and sulk in a corner for hours; and there was no gaiety at the court until a good understanding was restored. At this time the affections of the maid-of-honour were

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chiefly set upon her mistress, for whose sake alone she seems to have endured attentions which, to say the least, incommoded her. Madame de Motteville, in her Memoirs, assures us that Mademoiselle de Hautefort treated Louis at all times "as badly as it was permitted to treat a king." His neglect and hatred of his wife, founded upon the atrocious suspicions which Richelieu, for political purposes, succeeded in bringing upon her, deprived him of the respect of one whose generous nature revolted against all appearance of injustice. Towards Richelieu himself, as the chief author of the queen's misfortunes, she entertained feelings of contempt and dislike which she made no effort to conceal, although the mighty minister loaded her with compliments and attentions, calculating that her presence at the court was not fitted to increase the favour of Anne with Louis. Finding, however, that all his endeavours to change her from an enemy into a friend were vain, and that she was doing more service to the queen by pleading her cause than disservice by her personal attractions, Richelieu determined upon getting rid of her influence. He persuaded the king that she ridiculed his manners and his passion in his absence; and, instead of appeasing his scruples of conscience, as heretofore, he represented his affection as dangerous and contrary to religion. These means proving only partially effective, Richelieu called into play a rival beauty, Louise Angélique de la Fayette, who, with scarcely inferior virtues and personal attractions, had a nature more sympathetic with that of Louis. The king found in this lady a compassionate, patient, and friendly listener to the sorrows and complaints which he delighted in talking about to women; and their relationship soon ripened into the high and tender friendship which was ordinarily the limit of the king's "amours;" for, with all his weaknesses, his religion was sincere and his refinement remarkable; and the woman whom he could have suspected of a willingness to sacrifice her dignity to his affection would never have possessed it. In this instance, however, the king in a moment of passion forgot his better knowledge and Mademoiselle de la Fayette's honour so far as to propose that she should take up her residence at Versailles, and be "toute à lui." His punishment was heavy, but just. The noble young lady, between whom and himself there had for two years subsisted a most deep and happy friendship, determined, after many regrets and a strong struggle with her heart, to have no further communication with him but through the grating of a nunnery. Upon these terms, however, the king continued for many months to see her at the convent of St. Mary of the Visitation. Like Mademoiselle de Hautefort, Mademoiselle de la Fayette was constant in her favourable representations of the queen to her consort; and it was after one of

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these singular visits, that the king, prevented by a storm from returning to St. Maur, stopped a night at the Louvre, where was the queen, who nine months after gave birth to Louis XIV. During this period, Mademoiselle de Hautefort remained in the service of Anne, who was almost entirely abandoned by Louis, and solaced herself with maintaining, chiefly by means of Madame de Chevreuse, a correspondence with her royal relatives of Spain, then at war with France. The fact of this correspondence was treasonous; and the nature of it, whatever it may have been, was such that the queen had the greatest terror of its transpiring. At one moment her fate depended upon the correspondence of her replies to the examination imposed upon her by Richelieu with the statements of her confidant and aid La Porte, who was then in the Bastille. Mademoiselle de Hautefort, as heroic as she was beautiful and tender, disguised herself *en grisette*, left the Louvre at dawn, went in a *fiacre* alone to the Bastille, waited ever so long exposed to the coarse pleasantries of the *corps de garde* at the gate, obtained a solitary interview with the Chevalier de Jars, who had just received his pardon on the very scaffold for his part in the queen's affairs, prevailed upon him to risk his head again by making himself the means of conveying a letter to La Porte, returned as she came, had the good fortune to reach her apartment unrecognised; and was then for the first time overcome with the terrible risks to which she had exposed herself, and, what she prized far more, her unblemished reputation. In the political intrigues of the queen and Madame de Chevreuse she had no interest. Richelieu and the king were unjust; Anne suffered, and required service and consolation; and that was all the noble maiden knew or cared to know.

The prospect of the queen's becoming a mother, as soon as it was known, made a great improvement in her position with the king, who was thus again thrown into the society of Mademoiselle de Hautefort. His passion, for a time suspended by his affection for Mademoiselle de la Fayette, revived, and maintained for two years more its chaste and stormy life. The proud maiden refused to acquire any advantage to her not very splendid fortune; and the only honour she consented to receive was one from the hands of the queen—namely, the office of *dame d'atours*, which entitled her to be called Madame. Richelieu's jealousies reawakened with the passion of the king; there was no second Louise de la Fayette at hand; and the minister took advantage of the part which he had the means of proving that Mademoiselle de Hautefort had taken in aiding the queen in her forbidden correspondence with Madame de Chevreuse and other active enemies of the cardinal, to demand the dismissal of the favourite from the court. Louis resisted. Richelieu had recourse to his

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last and always successful trick: he gave the king to understand that he must choose between his minister and his mistress. Even this argument, however, only prevailed upon Louis to consent to her being exiled for a period of fourteen days. She refused to believe the direction to absent herself, on receiving it through Richelieu, and obtained an audience of the king, demanding of what crime she was accused. Louis replied that the order was wrung from him against his will; that it was but for temporary reasons of state, and that it gave him the greatest grief. This was not enough to satisfy the dignity and self-respect of the lady, who told him that in bidding him adieu for fourteen days she bade him adieu for ever. Mademoiselle de Chémerault, another of the queen's ladies, was dismissed at the same time; but only in order that she might continue to act as Richelieu's spy upon the words and actions of the noble creature, who fancied her her sincere friend. Mademoiselle de Hautefort thought that the queen had not treated Mademoiselle de Chémerault with sufficient generosity in the gifts she made her on her dismissal; and, utterly careless of her own interests, she addressed to Anne the noblest letter of remonstrance which it has ever been our happiness to read. Louis died without beholding her again; and, indeed, his fickle nature had been diverted from his sorrow for her loss by a new favourite, Cinq Mars. Anne was no sooner a widow than she begged Madame de Hautefort to return. She was now twenty-seven, and at the height of her beauty. She became the chief ornament of the famous Maison Rambouillet—at that time the place of reunion for the most refined and exclusive society the world has seen. Here, surrounded by the atmosphere of literary dilettantism, which turned all her contemporaries more or less into blue-stockings, and which in its less-dignified development at the assemblies of Mademoiselle de Scudéry afterwards provoked the ridicule of Molière, Madame de Hautefort's delicacy and tact preserved her from the airs of the *précieuse*. The few letters of her writing which remain are "toujours spirituelles, mais très négligées;" and a contemporary writer says, "Pour les vers, c'est sa passion: et, quoiqu'elle n'en fasse point, *elle les récite comme si elle les faisait*." As she was free from the prevailing intellectual dilettantism, she was equally a stranger to the more tempting, and, at that time, all but universal dilettantism of the affections. The consequence was, that the passions she inspired were deep, sincere, and really chivalrous. The mock chivalry of La Rochefoucauld became genuine towards her. On the eve of a battle he gave her brother a letter, containing a declaration of his love, to be given to her if he died; if not, to be returned. "C'était là," says M. Cousin, "comme on faisait la cour à Mlle. de Hautefort." Her nobler

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charms for a while eclipsed the attractions of Madame de Chevreuse in the eyes of Charles of Lorraine. On one occasion he took prisoner a French gentleman whom he discovered to be slightly acquainted with her. "I give you your liberty," he said; "and require nothing for your ransom but the honour of hearing that you have kissed, upon my part, the hem of the robe of Madame de Hautefort." And many another, in whom love had hitherto been vice, found it the well-head of virtue when inspired by her. A noble young soldier, the Marquis de Gêvres, had the inexpressible honour and happiness of touching the heart of this lady; but her royal admirer prevented their marriage, which was in course of arrangement; and, just as De Gêvres was restored to his hopes by the king's death, and was about to receive the staff of Marshal of France for his brilliant services, he was killed at the siege of Thionville. Madame de Hautefort's magnificent reserve upon all points touching her *own* interests and feelings permitted to none of the aristocratic memoir-writers of the time the means of informing posterity how far she was affected by these incidents.

Madame de Hautefort, on her return to the court of Anne of Austria, after the death of Richelieu and Louis XIII., had every reason to calculate upon reaping the reward of her faithful services, as far as such services can be rewarded temporally, in the unimpeded favour of the queen, who was now a queen indeed. But this change from the position of the powerless and oppressed consort to the absolute regent was not really favourable to Madame de Hautefort any more than it had been to Madame de Chevreuse. Madame de Hautefort cared very little for politics, and very much for her personal friends; and she was not prepared to look coldly upon all her old alliances, formed at first in the service and interest of the queen, merely because Anne, with a sense of responsibility which made the sacrifice a virtue in *her*, chose to abandon her former connections, and to take up with the partisans of Richelieu and the monarchy. The loyalty of Madame de Hautefort was of too high and heavenly a character for that. Her position at court, which she by no means undervalued, might still, however, have been maintained, had it not been for the peculiar favour to which Mazarin now rose, and the scandal created by his nightly conferences with the queen. It was more than the pride and delicacy of the *dame d'atours* could bear. Moreover, she was *dévote* full twenty years before the usual age,—for she was now only twenty-seven, and in all the splendour of her beauty; and affairs of state, which were made the excuse for these conferences, were trifles in her eyes when compared with a wilful indifference to even the "appearance of evil." She regarded silence under these circumstances as a crime; and, far from being

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intimidated by the dangers of interference and expostulation, those dangers acted as provocatives to a virtue of which the only drawback was a heroic intemperance, and a slight defect of suavity when, but only when, it had to do with the failings of kings and queens. In fact, Madame de Hautefort treated Anne, in her turn, "as ill as it was permitted to treat a queen;" that is to say, she displayed a marked disapproval of her conduct, and made no concealment of her dislike of Mazarin, which was unmitigated, although he, like Richelieu, did his very best to be well with her. Failing, he, like his predecessor, determined to get rid of her uncongenial influence; and the very means which Richelieu had used with Louis XIII., Mazarin employed with his royal mistress. He represented Madame de Hautefort as being in the habit of *publicly* expressing her views of the queen's conduct; and Anne, already irritated by the private representations of her *dame d'atours*, was completely estranged from her in heart by the calumnies and exaggerations of the minister. But to dismiss her from the court was not a step to be taken in haste. Madame de Hautefort was the idol of two very considerable parties, the Importants and the Saints; and in the court itself she was without an enemy besides Mazarin, and the mistress whom she persisted in serving too well. The little king, Louis XIV., was devotedly attached to her, and used to call her his wife; and several of the chief nobles of the country were suitors for her hand; in particular, Gassion, the general-in-chief of the French cavalry, the Duke de Liancour, and the Duke Charles de Schomberg, who were among the most valuable servants of the monarchy, were devoted to this lady with a passion which would not have forgiven any injury to her. The Duke de Schomberg seemed to be favoured by Madame de Hautefort; and it was highly to Mazarin's interest that an alliance should take place which would make her the wife of a man who hated partisanship, and would at least secure her neutrality towards the chief minister whom he served. Our readers must be sufficiently interested by this time in Madame de Hautefort to be curious to know something about the man who was to be her husband. He is thus painted by a contemporary: "Il avait les premières charges de la cour; il ne voyait que les princes au-dessus de lui. Il était fait à peu près comme on dépeint les héros de romans: il était noir; mais sa mine haute, guerrière, et majestueuse, inspirait du respect à ses amis et de la crainte à ses ennemis; il était magnifique, libéral, et avait fait des dépenses extraordinaires dans les emplois qu'il avait eu en commandant les armées de France. Sa mine était tellement pleine de majesté, qu'un jour, étant chez une dame et étant dans la ruelle avec un habit fort brillant d'or et d'argent, une nourrice de cette dame entrant dans la chambre

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en fut si surprise qu'elle s'approcha d'une demoiselle et lui demanda quel roi était là auprès de sa maîtresse?" A man, in externals at least, not unworthy of our heroine. But her true and stately soul did nothing in haste. She subjected her suitor's passion to the test of a long and dubious courtship; and felt herself bound not to abandon the court, as she probably might have to do for Languedoc, which was De Schomberg's government, until all had been done to retrieve the queen from her position with Mazarin; who was thus at length compelled to obtain by open rupture what he had hoped to effect quietly, and as if in the interest of his proud and beautiful enemy. The party of the Importants were scattered by a sort of *coup-d'état*, as we have seen in the story of Madame de Chevreuse; several even of the ladies about the queen's person were dismissed or warned; and Madame de Hautefort, of all Mazarin's political enemies, was the only one of any consequence who escaped defeat and humiliation on this occasion. *She* was far above suspicion of having had any part in the conspiracy which threw so many others into Mazarin's power; the candour and openness of her enmity puzzled and awed the prince of intriguers, and enabled her to dispute his influence with the queen, long after all the Importants, including the infinitely clever Madame de Chevreuse, were for the time put to silence. Madame de Hautefort was moreover to the party of the Saints what Madame de Chevreuse was to the Importants; and her opposition to Mazarin was made formidable by being supported with the whole influence of the *religieuses* of the convents of the Filles-de-Sainte-Marie, the Carmelites, and the Val-de-Grâce. But the warfare thus carried on afforded no cause for open accusation; and it was upon the always somewhat rash generosity of Madame de Hautefort in interceding for those whom she considered to have been unjustly treated, that her fall from court favour was made to depend. She irritated the queen greatly by representations in favour of Beaufort, in whose guilt she did not believe; and on one occasion was so emphatic in recommending the claims of some old servant to Anne's consideration, that the queen told her plainly that she was weary of her reprimands, and altogether dissatisfied with her conduct; and the next morning the *dame d'atours* received a command to quit the court. For a time she was in despair at having, as it appeared, irrevocably offended her to whose service her entire life had been devoted. Like Louise Angélique de la Fayette, she withdrew to the convent of Filles-de-Sainte-Marie, with the intention of becoming one of the *religieuses;* but, happily for the world, her lovely light was destined not to be so hidden under a bushel. Her adorers showed the sincerity of their vows by hastening to renew them now that she was in disgrace. The Duke de

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Schomberg's solicitations were listened to; and Madame de Hautefort, after a crowning act of nobility which we have not space to relate, but which involved a momentary giving up of her lover for the supposed interests of his family, became the Duchess de Schomberg at the age of thirty, in the year 1646. For ten years she was the tenderest and happiest of wives, and afterwards the holiest of widows. Her personal beauty increased with years, as perfectly noble beauty always does. As she had been the ornament of the Maison Rambouillet without affectation of literature, she now became that of Port-Royal without mixing herself with the Jansenist quarrel. It was in vain that Louis XIV. endeavoured to persuade her back to the court, "afin," as he said, "d'y rétablir la dignité et la grandeur qu'on commence à ne plus y voir." She led a life of active and unpretentious piety until 1691, which was the date of her translation from a life of grace to one of glory.

Where else shall we find another like her? Lady Rachel Russell, her contemporary, was nearer to her than any other we remember; an additional example in confirmation of the remark that nature is fond of bringing forth extraordinary persons in pairs; but Lady Russell seems neither to have had that magnificent physique, nor those splendid opportunities, which confer such a grand and full perfection on the picture of Madame de Hautefort. Do what we will with our understandings and moral principles, we can never make puritans of our tastes; and however the mind may cry *peccavi* for its preference, of two beautiful natures it always will prefer that which goes the most gloriously clad. Neither will the feelings accept potentialities for actualities. Lady Russell, in Madame de Hautefort's circumstances, almost certainly would have been no less noble; nay, it is more than likely that she would have avoided Madame de Hautefort's one mistake, which seems to have been an unnecessarily plainspoken way towards those who happened to have the power of resenting it with overwhelming effect. As it was, however, Lady Russell's opportunities were limited; and so France is left to boast the production of the most imposingly noble woman with whom history has made us acquainted.

We are aware that many of our readers will altogether dispute the principles by which we are induced to attribute such an eminence to a woman who was nothing more than a woman, holding the old orthodox rank of the "weaker vessel," and *as such* claiming peculiar honour; who was too much attached to her friends ever to soar quite out of the region of personalities; whose virtues were never startling, being all strung like pearls upon the silken thread of *propriety;* who was not without that amiable vanity which enhances our admiration by seeming not ungrateful

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for it; who, in fine, though virtuous and heroic when occasion required, was at all times and on all occasions nothing so much as womanly. Many others have been as virtuous, as beautiful, and as heroic; but none else has in an equal degree glorified these perfections by such an attractive radiance of *womanhood*,—that mysterious influence, which we can only describe by negatives and contradictions; that charming subordination, which affects us less as the necessity of a weaker being than as the complaisance of a nature which would rather persuade than command; that flattering inferiority, which allows us the leadership in wisdom, and is content that we should preach, so that it maintains the monopoly of the good example; that ever-present and ever-intangible charm, whose best praise is that it is the reverse of manhood. Marie de Hautefort has first taught us what a woman may be, and what a man may aspire to deserve.

We gladly take the opportunity of repeating, in connection with her life, what M. Guizot says, in concluding his beautiful essay on Lady Russell, called "L'Amour dans le Mariage:"

"I have felt profound pleasure in relating the history of this lady, so pure in her passion, always great, and always humble in her greatness, faithful and devoted, with equal ardour to her feelings and her duties in grief and joy, in triumph and adversity. Our times are attacked with a deplorable malady: men believe only in the passion which is attended with moral derangement: infinite love, perfect devotion, all ardent, exalted, and soul-mastering sentiments, appear to them impossible within the bounds of moral laws and social conventions; all order seems to them a paralysing yoke, all submission a debasing servitude; no flame is any thing if it is not a devouring conflagration. This disease is all the graver because it is not the crisis of a fever, nor the explosion of an exuberant force. It springs from perverse doctrines, from the rejection of law, faith, and superhuman existence, from the idolatry of man, who takes himself for God. And with this disease there is joined another no less lamentable: man not only adores nothing but himself; but even himself he adores only in the multitude where all men are confounded. He hates and envies every thing that rises above the vulgar level; all superiority, all individual grandeur, seems to him an iniquity and an injury towards that chaos of undistinguished and ephemeral beings whom he calls humanity. When he perceives, in the higher walks of society, some great scandal, some odious instance of vice and crime, he rejoices, and ardently turns it to the worst account against social superiorities, making it to be believed that such things are the natural consequences of high birth, great fortune, aristocratic condition. When we have been assailed by

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these base doctrines, and the shameful passions which give birth to, or are born from, them; when we have felt the hatefulness of them and measured the peril, it is a very lively delight to meet with one of those noble examples which are their splendid confutation. In proportion as I respect humanity in its totality, I admire and love those glorified images of humanity, which personify and set on high, under visible features and with a proper name, whatever it has of most noble and most pure. Lady Russell gives the soul this beautiful and virtuous joy. *C'est une grande dame chrétienne.*" And if Lady Russell and Madame de Hautefort are splendid and unanswerable replies to vulgar depreciations of aristocracy, they offer no less forcible and illustrious denials of the calumnies on womanhood which with our generation pass for praise. Of all the monstrous births of modern philosophy, surely none is so monstrous, so marked with *moral* ignorance and deterioration, as the doctrine of the equality of man and woman, in the form in which it is at present widely preached. No woman, who has read the foregoing pages, will suspect us of desiring to derogate from her honour; and, indeed, our indignation is, not so much because the doctrine in point diminishes the honour of man, as because it sullies by misrepresenting that of his gentle ally. Surely she has points of superiority enough, without disputing the sole points which we and nature deny to her—namely, wisdom for the legislative, and force for the executive, in life. Well aware that we really abuse what we overrate, we yet deliberately admit an excellency of nature in woman which puts to the blush the best results of grace in man. Her superiority to man in that wherein he most excels the beasts, religion; his physical inferiority to her in almost every thing but that in which the beasts excel him, strength; the only virtue in which she does not share being that in which they do, physical courage; her far greater readiness to rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep; her infinite versatility, which caused an old writer to say: "Sing of the nature of woman, and then the song shall be surely full of varieties, old crotchets, and most sweet closes,—it shall be humour grave, fantastic, loving, melancholy, sprightly, one in all and all in one;" her beauty, which is love visible, which purifies our passions in exciting them, and makes our desires glow like sunny clouds in the sky of a pure conscience; her voice, which is audible benevolence; her manner, a miracle of lovely tact, and candour subtly-paced as guile;—these and other praises, which would exhaust us long before we exhausted them, are surely enough to countervalue that poor predominance of power with which the brain and muscles of man are indefeasibly endowed, and which force kingship upon him in the very teeth

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of his false philosophy. The happiness and dignity of man and woman require, not a confusion, but a complete distinction, of their relations; and the title of the "weaker vessel," being, on the best authority, the woman's peculiar title to honour, is not to be forgotten and ignored, but contemplated and loved. Only thus can their absolutely infinite capability of being mutually exalted come into effect. They are like the two plates of the philosophical instrument called the electrical doubler, which by mutual opposition under proper circumstances indefinitely intensify their contrasted conditions: her softness, delicacy, tenderness, compliance, fear, and confidence, opposed to whatever strength, courage, gravity, firmness, dignity, and originality, there may have been in him before, render a certain exaltation of these virtues, for her sake, easy; every such exaltation upon his part induces in her a more passionate submission, whereby her peculiar qualities are correspondingly developed; and every such increment of loving and intelligent self-devotion calls upon him, in turn, for the delightful exercise of a higher degree of manhood, in order that he may deserve it. How hopeful would be that reform which should begin where life begins, in the relation of the sexes! How hopeless all reforms which attempt to clear the social current any where but at its source! There are certain moral processes which seem to be antecedent to religion. St. Paul tells us that the man who does not provide for those of his own household has not only denied the faith, but "*is worse than an infidel;*" and religion does not so much teach as assume a knowledge of the primary *facts* of nature, which those, who in our day are worse than infidels, represent as *doctrines*, in order that it may be possible to deny them. The family titles are those by which God reveals His relation to us and ours to Him; and to misinterpret them is to obscure revelation in its very terms. The human affections are the living figures by which we are to be taught to comprehend and feel those which are divine. The performance of natural duties, and the possession of natural knowledge, constitute and indicate that "honest and good heart," which we are told is not the fruit of the seed of faith, but the ground in which it must be sown, in order to come to perfection. Now the relation of husband and wife, besides being the first and strongest of human ties, is the source from which they all spring; and a miscomprehension of the nature of the primary relation necessarily involves error in the understanding of those which are derivative.

In conclusion, let us thank M. Cousin for a series of works—for each of these four volumes *is* a "work" in a sense in which few books are so now—which will probably bring him quite as much credit as his graver performances. We have met with few

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volumes, in which the history of France during the time of Louis XIII. and the Regency can be so agreeably and safely studied, by one who already knows something of the subject, as in these. They contain the fruits of many years' research, pursued with enthusiasm, and now put forth with simplicity and integrity. The style of M. Cousin is perfectly free from the epigrammatic and antithetical cleverness which casts suspicion upon the writings of some even of the soundest of modern French writers. We rise from the perusal of these volumes with the liveliest impressions of the characters of Richelieu, Mazarin, Louis XIII., Anne of Austria, Condé, La Rochefoucauld, and many others; but there is little or none of the set character-painting of which French writers are commonly so fond. The effects are all made by an honest rendering of *facts*. To the professed historian, the most valuable portions of these publications will be the voluminous appendices, consisting of unpublished documents, for the most part of high interest.

Art. IV.—PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

The Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley. Edited by Mrs. Shelley. 1853.

Essays, Letters from Abroad, Translations, and Fragments. By Percy Bysshe Shelley. Edited by Mrs. Shelley. 1854.

The Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley. By Captain Thomas Medwin. 1847.

After the long biography of Moore, it is half a comfort to think of a poet as to whom our information is but scanty. The few intimates of Shelley seem inclined to go to their graves without telling in accurate detail the curious circumstances of his life. We are left to be content with vague "prefaces" and the circumstantial details of a remarkable blunderer. We know something, however;—we know enough to check our inferences from his writings; in some moods it is pleasant not to have them disturbed by long volumes of memoirs and anecdotes.

One peculiarity of Shelley's writing makes it natural that at times we should not care to have, that at times we should wish for, a full biography. No writer has left so clear an image of himself in his writings; when we remember them as a whole, we seem to want no more. No writer, on the other hand, has left so many little allusions which we should be glad to have ex-

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plained, which the patient patriarch would not perhaps have endured that any one should comprehend while he did not. The reason is, that Shelley has combined the use of the two great modes by which writers leave with their readers the image of themselves. There is the art of self-delineation. Some authors try in imagination to get outside themselves—to contemplate their character as a fact, and to describe it and the movement of their own actions as external forms and images. Scarcely any one has done this as often as Shelley. There is hardly one of his longer works which does not contain a finished picture of himself in some point or under some circumstances. Again, some writers, almost or quite unconsciously, by a special instinct of style, give an idea of themselves. This is not peculiar to literary men; it is quite as remarkable among men of action. There are people in the world who cannot write the commonest letter on the commonest affair of business without giving a just idea of themselves. The Duke of Wellington is an example which at once occurs of this. You may read a despatch of his about bullocks and horseshoe-nails; and yet you will feel an interest—a great interest, because somehow among the words seems to lurk the mind of a great general. Shelley has this peculiarity also. Every line of his has a personal impress, an unconscious inimitable manner. And the two modes in which he gives an idea of himself concur. In every delineation we see the same simple intense being. As mythology found a Naiad in the course of every liquid stream, so through each eager line our fancy sees the same panting image of sculptured purity.

Shelley's is probably the most remarkable instance of the pure impulsive character. Some men are born under the law: their whole life is a continued struggle between the lower principles of their nature and the higher. These are what are called men of principle; each of their best actions is a distinct choice between conflicting motives. One propension would bear them here; another there; a third would hold them still: into the midst the living will goes forth in its power, and selects whichever it holds to be best. The habitual supremacy of conscience in such men gives them an idea that they only exert their will when they do right; when they do wrong they seem to "let their nature go;" they say that "they are hurried away:" but, in fact, there is commonly an act of will in both cases;—only it is weaker when they act ill, because in passably good men, if the better principles are reasonably strong, they conquer; it is only when very faint that they are vanquished. Yet the case is evidently not always so; sometimes the wrong principle is of itself and of set purpose definitely chosen. The very existence of divided natures is a conflict. This is no new description

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of human nature. For eighteen hundred years Christendom has been amazed at the description in St. Paul of the law of his members warring against the law of his mind. Expressions most unlike in language, but not dissimilar in meaning, are to be found in some of the most familiar passages of Aristotle.

In extreme contrast to this is the nature which has no struggle. It is possible to conceive a character in which but one impulse is ever felt—in which the whole being, as with a single breeze, is carried in a single direction. The only exercise of the will in such a being is in aiding and carrying out the dictates of the single propensity. And this is something. There are many of our powers and faculties only in a subordinate degree under the control of the emotions; the intellect itself in many moments requires to be bent to defined attention by compulsion of the will; no mere intensity of desire will thrust it on its tasks. But of what in most men is the characteristic action of the will, —namely, self-control,—such natures are hardly in want. An ultimate case could be imagined in which they would not need it at all. They have no lower desires to pull down, for they have no higher ones which come into collision with them; the very words 'lower' and 'higher,' involving the contemporaneous action and collision of two impulses, are inapplicable to them; there is no strife; all their soul impels them in a single line. Of course this may be a quality of the highest character: indeed, in the highest character it will certainly be found; no one will question that the whole nature of the holiest being tends to what is holy without let, struggle, or strife—it would be impiety to doubt it. Yet this same quality may certainly be found in a lower—a much lower—mind than the highest. A level may be of any elevation; the absence of intestine commotion may arise from a sluggish dullness to eager aspirations; the one impulse which is felt may be any impulse whatever. If the idea were completely exemplified, one would instinctively say, that a being with so single a mind could hardly belong to human nature. Temptation is the mark of our life; we can hardly divest ourselves of the idea that it is indivisible from our character. As it was said of solitude, so it may be said of the sole dominion of a single impulse, "Whoso is devoted to it would seem to be either a beast or a god."

Completely realised on earth this idea will never be; but approximations may be found, and one of the closest of those approximations is Shelley. We fancy his mind placed in the light of thought, with pure subtle fancies playing to and fro. On a sudden an impulse arises; it is alone, and has nothing to contend with; it cramps the intellect, pushes aside the fancies, constrains the nature; it *bolts* forward into action. Such a cha-

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racter is an extreme puzzle to external observers. From the occasionality of its impulses it will often seem silly; from their singularity, strange; from their intensity, fanatical. It is absurdest in the more trifling matters. There is a legend of Shelley, during an early visit to London, flying along the street, catching sight of a new microscope, buying it in a moment; pawning it the instant afterwards to relieve some one in the same street in distress. The trait may be exaggerated, but it is characteristic. It shows the sudden irruption of his impulses, their abrupt force and curious purity.

The predominant impulse in Shelley from a very early age was "a passion for reforming mankind." Mr. Newman has told us in his Letters from the East how much he and his half-missionary associates were annoyed at being called "young people trying to convert the world." In a strange land, ignorant of the language, beside a recognised religion, in the midst of an immemorial society, the aim, though in a sense theirs, seemed ridiculous when ascribed to them. Shelley would not have felt this at all. No society, however organised, would have been too strong for him to attack. He would not have paused. The impulse was upon him. He would have been ready to preach that mankind were to be "free, equal, pure, and wise,"—in favour of "justice, and truth, and time, and the world's natural sphere,"—in the Ottoman empire, or to the Czar, or to George III. Such truths were independent of time and place and circumstance; some time or other, something, or somebody, (his faith was a little vague) would most certainly intervene to establish them. It was this placid undoubting confidence which irritated the positive and sceptical mind of Hazlitt. "The author of the 'Prometheus Unbound,'" he tells us, "has a fire in his eye, a fever in his blood, a maggot in his brain, a hectic flutter in his speech, which mark out the philosophic fanatic. He is sanguine-complexioned and shrill-voiced. As is often observable in the case of religious enthusiasts, there is a slenderness of constitutional stamina, which renders the flesh no match for the spirit. His bending, flexible form appears to take no strong hold of things, does not grapple with the world about him, but slides from it like a river—

> 'And in its liquid texture mortal wound
> Receives no more than can the fluid air.'

The shock of accident, the weight of authority, make no impression on his opinions, which retire like a feather, or rise from the encounter unhurt, through their own buoyancy. He is clogged by no dull system of realities, no earth-bound feelings, no rooted prejudices, by nothing that belongs to the mighty trunk and hard husk of nature and habit; but is drawn up by irresistible

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levity to the regions of mere speculation and fancy, to the sphere of air and fire, where his delighted spirit floats in 'seas of pearl and clouds of amber.' There is no *caput mortuum* of worn-out threadbare experience to serve as ballast to his mind; it is all volatile intellectual salt-of-tartar, that refuses to combine its evanescent, inflammable essence with any thing solid or any thing lasting. Bubbles are to him the only realities:—touch them, and they vanish. Curiosity is the only proper category of his mind; and though a man in knowledge, he is a child in feeling." And so on with vituperation. No two characters could, indeed, be found more opposite than the open, eager, buoyant poet, and the dark, threatening, unbelieving critic.

It is difficult to say how far such a tendency under some circumstances might not have carried Shelley into positions most alien to an essential benevolence. It is most dangerous to be possessed with an idea. Dr. Arnold used to say that he had studied the life of Robespierre with the greatest personal benefit. No personal purity is a protection against insatiable zeal; it almost acts in the opposite direction. The less a man is conscious of inferior motives, the more likely is he to fancy that he is doing God service. There is no difficulty in imagining Shelley cast by the accident of fortune into the Paris of the Revolution; hurried on by its ideas, undoubting in its hopes, wild with its excitement, going forth in the name of freedom conquering and to conquer;—and who can think that he would have been scrupulous how he attained such an end? It was in him to have walked towards it over seas of blood. One could almost identify him with St. Just, the "fair-haired republican."

On another and a more generally interesting topic, Shelley advanced a theory which amounts to a deification of impulse. "Love," he tells us, "is inevitably consequent upon the perception of loveliness. Love withers under constraint: its very essence is liberty; it is compatible neither with obedience, jealousy, nor fear; it is there most pure, perfect, and unlimited, where its votaries live in confidence, equality, and unreserve. . . . . A husband and wife ought to continue united only so long as they love each other. Any law which should bind them to cohabitation for one moment after the decay of their affection would be a most intolerable tyranny, and the most unworthy of toleration. How odious an usurpation of the right of private judgment should that law be considered, which should make the ties of friendship indissoluble, in spite of the caprices, the inconstancy, the fallibility, of the human mind! And by so much would the fetters of love be heavier and more unendurable than those of friendship, as love is more vehement and capricious, more dependent on those delicate peculiarities of

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imagination, and less capable of reduction to the ostensible merits of the object." This passage, no doubt, is from an early and crude essay, one of the notes to "Queen Mab;" and there are many indications, in his latter years, that though he might hold in theory that "constancy has nothing virtuous in itself," yet in practice he shrank from breaking a tie hallowed by years of fidelity and sympathy. But though his conduct was doubtless higher than his creed, there is no evidence that his creed was ever changed. The whole tone of his works is on the other side. The "Epipsychidion" could not have been written by a man who attached a moral value to constancy of *mind*. And the whole doctrine is most expressive of his character. A quivering sensibility endured only the essence of the most refined love. It is intelligible, that one who bowed in a moment to every desire should have attached a kind of consecration to the most pure and eager of human passions.

The evidence of Shelley's poems confirms this impression of him. The characters which he delineates have all this same kind of pure impulse. The reforming impulse is especially felt. In almost every one of his works there is some character, of whom all we know is, that he or she had this passionate disposition to reform mankind. We know nothing else about them, and they are all the same. Laon, in the "Revolt of Islam," does not differ at all from Lionel, in "Rosalind and Helen." Laon differs from Cythna, in the former poem, only as male from female. Lionel is delineated, though not with Shelley's greatest felicity, in a single passage:

> "Yet through those dungeon-walls there came
> Thy thrilling light, O liberty!
> And as the meteor's midnight flame
> Startles the dreamer, sunlight truth
> Flashed on his visionary youth,
> And filled him, not with love, but faith,
> And hope, and courage, mute in death;
> For love and life in him were twins,
> Born at one birth: in every other
> First life, then love its course begins,
> Though they be children of one mother:
> And so through this dark world they fleet
> Divided, till in death they meet.
> But he loved all things ever. Then
> He passed amid the strife of men,
> And stood at the throne of armed power
> Pleading for a world of woe:
> Secure as one on a rock-built tower
> O'er the wrecks which the surge trails to and fro.
> 'Mid the passions wild of human-kind
> He stood, like a spirit calming them;
> For, it was said, his words could bind
> Like music the lulled crowd, and stem

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That torrent of unquiet dream
Which mortals truth and reason deem,
But is revenge, and fear, and pride.
Joyous he was, and hope and peace
On all who heard him did abide,
Raining like dew from his sweet talk,
As, where the evening star may walk
Along the brink of the gloomy seas,
Liquid mists of splendour quiver."

Such is the description of all his reformers in calm. In times of excitement, they all burst forth—

"Fear not the tyrants shall rule for ever,
Or the priests of the bloody faith;
They stand on the brink of that mighty river
Whose waves they have tainted with death;
It is fed from the depths of a thousand dells,
Around them it foams, and rages, and swells:
And their swords and their sceptres I floating see,
Like wrecks in the surge of eternity."

In his more didactic poems it is the same. All the world is evil, and will be evil, until some unknown conqueror shall appear—a teacher by rhapsody and a conqueror by words—who shall at once reform all evil. Mathematicians place great reliance on the unknown symbol, great X. Shelley did more; he expected it would take life and reform our race. Such impersonations are, of course, not real men; they are mere incarnations of a desire. Another passion, which no man has ever felt more strongly than Shelley—the desire to penetrate the mysteries of existence (by Hazlitt profanely called curiosity)—is depicted in "Alastor" as the sole passion of the only person in the poem:

"By solemn vision and bright silver dream
His infancy was nurtured. Every sight
And sound from the vast earth and ambient air
Sent to his heart its choicest impulses.
The fountains of divine philosophy
Fled not his thirsting lips; and all of great,
Or good, or lovely, which the sacred past
In truth or fable consecrates, he felt
And knew. When early youth had past, he left
His cold fire-side and alienated home
To seek strange truths in undiscovered lands.
Many a wide waste and tangled wilderness
Has lured his fearless steps; and he has bought
With his sweet voice and eyes, from savage men,
His rest and food."

He is cheered on his way by a beautiful dream, and the search to find it again mingles with the shadowy quest. It is remarkable how great is the superiority of the personification in "Alastor," though one of his earliest writings, over the reforming

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abstractions of his other works. The reason is, its far greater closeness to reality. The one is a description of what he was; the other of what he desired to be. Shelley had nothing of the magic influence, the large insight, the bold strength, the permeating eloquence, which fit a man for a practical reformer; but he had, in perhaps an unequalled and unfortunate measure, the famine of the intellect—the daily insatiable craving after the highest truth—which is the passion of "Alastor." So completely did he feel it, that the introductory lines of the poem almost seem to identify him with the hero; at least they express sentiments which would have been exactly dramatic in his mouth:

> "Mother of this unfathomable world!
> Favour my solemn song; for I have loved
> Thee ever, and thee only: I have watched
> Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy steps,
> And my heart ever gazes on the depth
> Of thy deep mysteries. I have made my bed
> In charnels and on coffins, where black death
> Keeps records of the trophies won from thee,
> Hoping to still these obstinate questionings
> Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone ghost,
> Thy messenger, to render up the tale
> Of what we are. In lone and silent hours,
> When night makes a weird sound of its own stillness,
> Like an inspired and desperate alchymist,
> Staking his very life on some dark hope,
> Have I mixed awful talk and asking looks
> With my most innocent love; until strange tears,
> Uniting with those breathless kisses, made
> Such magic as compels the charmed night
> To render up thy charge . . . . and, though ne'er yet
> Thou hast unveiled thy inmost sanctuary,
> Enough from incommunicable dream,
> And twilight fantasms and deep noonday thought,
> Has shone within me, that serenely now,
> And moveless as a long-forgotten lyre,
> Suspended in the solitary dome
> Of some mysterious and deserted fane,
> I wait thy breath, Great Parent, that my strain
> May modulate with murmurs of the air,
> And motions of the forests and the sea,
> And voice of living beings, and woven hymns
> Of night and day, and the deep heart of man."

The accompaniments are fanciful; but the essential passion was his own.

These two forms of abstract personification exhaust all which can be considered characters among Shelley's poems—one poem excepted. Of course, all his works contain "Spirits," "Phantasms," "Dream No. 1," and "Fairy No. 3;" but these do not belong to this world. The higher air seems never to have been favourable to the production of marked character; with almost

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all poets the inhabitants of it are prone to a shadowy thinness: in Shelley, the habit of frequenting mountain-tops has reduced them to evanescent mists of lyrical energy. One poem of Shelley's, however, has two beings of another order; creations which if not absolutely dramatic characters of the first class—not beings whom we know better than we know ourselves—are nevertheless very high specimens of the second; persons who seem like vivid recollections from our intimate experience. In this case the dramatic execution is so good, that it is difficult to say why the results are not quite of the first rank. One reason of this is, perhaps, their extreme simplicity. Our imaginations, warned by consciousness and outward experience of the wonderful complexity of human nature, refuse to credit the existence of beings, all whose actions are unmodified consequences of a single principle. These two characters are Beatrice Cenci and her father Count Cenci. In most of Shelley's poems—he died under thirty—there is an extreme suspicion of aged persons. In actual life he had plainly encountered many old gentlemen who had no belief in the complete and philosophical reformation of mankind. There is, indeed, an old hermit in the "Revolt of Islam" who is praised, (Captain Medwin identifies him with a Dr. Some-one who was kind to Shelley at Eton); but in general the old persons in his poems are persons whose authority it is desirable to disprove:

> "Old age, with its gray hair
> And wrinkled legends of unworthy things
> And icy sneers, is naught."

The less its influence, he evidently believes, the better. Not unnaturally, therefore, he selected for a tragedy a horrible subject from Italian story, in which an old man, accomplished in this world's learning, renowned for the "cynic sneer of o'er-experienced sin," is the principal evil agent. The character of Count Cenci is that of a man who of set principle does evil for evil's sake. He loves "the sight of agony:"

> "All men delight in sensual luxury;
> All men enjoy revenge; and most exult
> Over the tortures they can never feel,
> Flattering their secret peace with others' pain:
> But I delight in nothing else."

If he regrets his age, it is from the failing ability to do evil:

> "True, I was happier than I am while yet
> Manhood remained to act the thing I thought;
> While lust was sweeter than revenge: and now
> Invention palls."

It is this that makes him contemplate the violation of his daughter:

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> "There yet remains a deed to act,
> Whose horror might make sharp an appetite
> More dull than mine."

Shelley, though an habitual student of Plato—the greatest modern writer who has taken great pleasure in his writings—never seems to have read any treatise of Aristotle; otherwise he would certainly seem to have derived from that great writer the idea of the ἀκόλαστος; yet in reality the idea is as natural to Shelley as any man—more likely to occur to him than to most. Children think that every body who is bad is very bad. Their simple eager disposition only understands the doing what they wish to do; they do not refine: if they hear of a man doing evil, they think he wishes to do it,—that he has a special impulse to do evil, as they have to do what they do. Something like this was the case with Shelley. His mind, impulsive and childlike, could not imagine the struggling kind of character—either those which struggle with their lower nature and conquer, or those which struggle and are vanquished—either the ἐγκρατής or the ἀκρατής of the old thinker; but he could comprehend that which is in reality far worse than either, the being who wishes to commit sin because it is sin, who is as it were possessed with a demon hurrying him on, hot and passionate, to vice and crime. The innocent child is whirled away by one impulse; the passionate reformer by another; the essential criminal, if such a being be possible, by a third. They are all beings, according to one division, of the same class. An imaginative mind like Shelley's, belonging to the second of these types, naturally is prone in some moods to embody itself under the forms of the third. It is, as it were, the antithesis to itself.—Equally simple is the other character—that of Beatrice. Even before her violation, by a graphic touch of art, she is described as absorbed, or beginning to be absorbed, in the consciousness of her wrongs:

> "*Beatrice.* As I have said, speak to me not of love.
> Had you a dispensation, I have not;
> Nor will I leave this home of misery
> Whilst my poor Bernard, and that gentle lady
> To whom I owe life and these virtuous thoughts,
> Must suffer what I still have strength to share.
> Alas, Orsino! all the love that once
> I felt for you is turned to bitter pain.
> Ours was a youthful contract, which you first
> Broke by assuming vows no Pope will loose:
> And thus I love you still, but holily,
> Even as a sister or a spirit might;
> And so I swear a cold fidelity."

After her violation, her whole being is absorbed by one thought,—how and by what subtle vengeance she can expiate the me-

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mory of her shame. These are all the characters in Shelley; an impulsive unity is of the essence of them all.

The same characteristic of Shelley's temperament produced also most marked effects on his speculative opinions. The peculiarity of his creed early brought him into opposition to the world. His education seems to have been principally directed by his father, of whom the only description which has reached us is not favourable. Sir Timothy Shelley, according to Captain Medwin, was an illiterate country gentleman of an extinct race; he had been at Oxford, where he learned nothing; had made the grand tour, from which he brought back "a smattering of bad French and a bad picture of an eruption at Vesuvius." He had the air of the old school, and the habit of throwing it off which distinguished that school. Lord Chesterfield himself was not easier on matters of morality. He used to tell his son that he would provide for natural children *ad infinitum*, but would never forgive his making a *mésalliance*. On religion his opinions were very lax. He, indeed, "required his servants," we are told, "to attend church," and even on rare occasions, with superhuman virtue, attended himself; but there, as with others of that generation, his religion ended. He doubtless did not feel that any more could be required of him. He was not consciously insincere; but he did not in the least realise the opposition between the religion which he professed and the conduct which he pursued. Such a person was not likely to influence a morbidly sincere imaginative nature in favour of the doctrines of the Church of England. Shelley went from Eton, where he had been singular, to Oxford, where he was more so. He was a fair classical scholar; but his real mind was given to out-of-school knowledge. He had written a novel; he had studied chemistry; when pressed in argument, he used to ask, "What, then, does Condorcet say upon the subject?" This was not exactly the youth for the University of Oxford in the year 1810. A distinguished pupil of that University once observed to us, "The use of the University of Oxford is, that no one can over-read themselves there. The appetite for knowledge is repressed. A blight is thrown over the ingenuous mind, &c." And possibly it may be so; considering how small a space literary knowledge fills in the busy English world, it may not be without its advantages that any mind prone to bookish enthusiasm should be taught by the dryness of its appointed studies, the want of sympathy of its teachers, and a rough contact with average English youth, that studious enthusiasm must be its own reward; that in this country it will meet with little other; that it will not be encouraged in high places. Such discipline may, however, be carried too far. A very enthusiastic mind may possibly by it be turned in upon itself. Such was the case

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with Shelley. When he first came up to Oxford physics were his favourite pursuit. On chemistry, especially, he used to be eloquent. "The galvanic battery," said he, "is a new engine. It has been used hitherto to an insignificant extent; yet it has worked wonders already. What will not an extraordinary combination of troughs of colossal magnitude, a well-arranged system of hundreds of metallic plates, effect?" Nature, however, like the world, discourages a wild enthusiasm. "His chemical operations seemed to an unskilful observer to promise nothing but disasters. He had blown himself up at Eton. He had inadvertently swallowed some mineral poison, which he declared had seriously injured his health, and from the effects of which he should never recover. His hands, his clothes, his books, and his furniture, were stained and covered by medical acids," and so on. Disgusted with these and other failures, he abandoned physics for metaphysics. He rushed headlong into the form of philosophy then popular. It is not likely that he ever read Locke; and it is easy to imagine the dismay with which the philosopher would have regarded so "heady and skittish" a disciple: but he continually invoked Locke as an authority, and was really guided by the French expositions of him then popular. Hume, of course, was not without his influence. With such teachers only to control him, an excitable poet rushed in a moment to materialism, and thence to atheism. Deriving any instruction from the University, was, according to him, absurd; he wished to convert the University. He issued a kind of thesis, stating by way of interrogatory all the difficulties of the subject; called it the "necessity of atheism," and sent it to the professors, heads of houses, and several bishops. The theistic belief of his college was equal to the occasion. "It was a fine spring morning on Lady-day in the year 1811, when," says a fellow-student, "I went to Shelley's rooms. He was absent; but before I had collected our books, he rushed in. He was terribly agitated. I anxiously inquired what had happened. 'I am expelled.' He then explained that he had been summoned before the Master and some of the fellows; that as he was unable to deny the authorship of the essay, he had been expelled, and ordered to quit the college the next morning at latest." He had wished to be put on his trial more regularly, and stated to the Master that England was "a free country;" but without effect. He was obliged to leave Oxford: his father was very angry; "if he had broken the Master's windows, one could have understood it;" but to be expelled for publishing a *book* seemed an error incorrigible, because incomprehensible.

These details at once illustrate Shelley's temperament, and enable us to show that the peculiarity of his opinions arose out of

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that temperament. He was placed in circumstances which left his eager mind quite free. Of his father we have already spoken: there was no one else to exercise a subduing or guiding influence over him; nor would his mind have naturally been one extremely easy to influence. Through life he followed very much his own bent and his own thoughts. His most intimate associates exercised little control over his belief. He followed his nature; and that nature was in a singular degree destitute of certain elements which most materially guide ordinary men. It seems most likely that a person prone to isolated impulse will be defective in the sensation of conscience. There is scarcely room for it. When, as in common conflicting characters, the whole nature is daily and hourly in a perpetual struggle, the faculty which decides what elements in that nature are to have the supremacy is daily and hourly appealed to. Passions are contending; life is a discipline; there is a reference every moment to the directory of the discipline—the order-book of the passions. In temperaments not exposed to the ordinary struggle there is no such necessity. Their impulse guides them; they have little temptation; are scarcely under the law; have hardly occasion to consult the statute-book. In consequence, simple and beautiful as such minds often are, they are deficient in the sensation of duty; have no haunting idea of right or wrong; show an easy *abandon* in place of a severe self-scrutiny. At first it might seem that such minds lose little; they are exempted from the consciousness of a code to whose provisions they need little access. But such would be the conclusion only from a superficial view of human nature. The whole of our inmost faith is a series of intuitions; and experience seems to show that the intuitions of conscience are the beginning of that series. Childhood has little which can be called a religion; the shows of this world, the play of its lights and shadows, suffice. It is in the collision of our nature, which occurs in youth, that the first real sensation of faith is felt. Conscience is often then morbidly acute; a flush passes over the youthful mind; the guiding instinct is keen and strong, like the passions with which it contends. At the first struggle of our nature commences our religion. Childhood will utter the words; in early manhood, when we become half-unwilling to utter them, they begin to have a meaning. The result of history is similar. The whole of religion rests on a faith that the universe is solely ruled by an almighty and all-perfect Being. This strengthens with the moral cultivation, and grows with the improvement of mankind. It is the assumed axiom of the creed of Christendom; and all that is really highest in our race may have the degree of its excellence tested by the degree of the belief in it. But experience shows that the belief

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only grows very gradually. We see at various times, and now, vast outlying nations in whom the conviction of morality,—the consciousness of a law,—is but weak; and there the belief in an all-perfect God is half-forgotten, faint, and meagre. It exists as something between a tradition and a speculation; but it does not come forth on the solid earth; it has no place in the business and bosoms of men; it is thrust out of view even when we look upwards by fancied idols and dreams of the stars in their courses. Consider the state of the Jewish, as compared with the better part of the pagan world of old. On the one side we see civilisation, commerce, the arts, a great excellence in all the exterior of man's life; a sort of morality sound and sensible, placing the good of man in a balanced moderation within and good looks without,—in a combination of considerate good sense, with the *air* of aristocratic, or, as it was said, "godlike," refinement. We see, in a word, civilisation, and the ethics of civilisation; the first polished, the other elaborated and perfected. But this is all; we do not see faith. We see in some quarters rather a horror of the *curiosus deus* interfering, controlling, watching,—never letting things alone,—disturbing the quiet of the world with punishment and the fear of punishment. The Jewish side of the picture is different. We see a people who have perhaps an inaptitude for independent civilisation, who in secular pursuits have only been assistants and attendants on other nations during the whole history of mankind. These have no equable, beautiful morality like the others; but instead a gnawing, abiding, depressing—one might say, a slavish—ceremonial, excessive sense of law and duty. This nation has faith. By a link not logical, but ethical, this intense, eating, abiding supremacy of conscience is connected with a deep daily sense of a watchful, governing, and jealous God. And from the people of the law arises the gospel. The sense of duty, when awakened, awakens not only the religion of the law, but in the end the other religious intuitions which lie round about it. The faith of Christendom has arisen not from a great people, but from "the least of all people,"—from the people whose anxious legalism was a noted contrast to the easy, impulsive life of pagan nations. In modern language, conscience is the *converting* intuition,—that which turns men from the world without to that within,—from the things which are seen to the realities which are not seen. In a character like Shelley's, where this haunting, abiding, oppressive moral feeling is wanting or defective, the religious belief in an Almighty God which springs out of it is likely to be defective likewise.

In Shelley's case this deficiency was aggravated by what may be called the abstract character of his intellect. We have shown

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that no character except his own, and characters most strictly allied to his own, are delineated in his works. The tendency of his mind was rather to personify isolated qualities or impulses —equality, liberty, revenge, and so on—than to create out of separate parts or passions the single conception of an entire character. This is, properly speaking, the mythological tendency. All early nations show this marked disposition to conceive of separate forces and qualities as a kind of semi-persons; that is, not true actual persons with distinct characters, but beings who guide certain influences, and of whom all we know is that they guide those influences. Shelley evinces a remarkable tendency to deal with mythology in this simple and elementary form. Other poets have breathed into mythology a modern life; have been attracted by those parts which seem to have a religious meaning, and have enlarged that meaning while studying to embody it. With Shelley it is otherwise; the parts of mythology by which he is attracted are the bare parts,—the simple stories which Dr. Johnson found so tedious:

"Arethusa arose
From her couch of snows
In the Acroceraunian mountains.
From cloud and from crag,
With many a jag,
Shepherding her bright fountains,
She leapt down from the rocks
With her rainbow locks
Streaming among the streams;
Her steps paved with green
The downward ravine,
Which slopes to the western gleams;
And gliding and springing,
She went ever singing,
In murmurs as soft as sleep;
And earth seemed to love her,
And heaven smiled above her,
As she lingered towards the deep.
Then Alpheus bold,
On his glacier cold,
With his trident the mountains shook,
&c. &c."

Arethusa and Alpheus are not characters; they are only the spirits of the stream. When not writing on topics connected with ancient mythology, Shelley shows the same bent. "The Cloud," and the "Skylark," are more like mythology—have more of the impulse by which the populace, if we may so say, of the external world was first fancied into existence—than any other modern poems. There is, indeed, no habit of mind more remote from our solid and matter-of-fact existence; none which was once powerful, of which the present traces are so rare. In truth,

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Shelley's imagination achieved all it could with the materials before it. The materials for the creative faculty must be provided by the receptive faculty. Before a man can imagine what will seem to be realities, he must be familiar with what are realities. The memory of Shelley had no heaped-up "store of life," no vast accumulation of familiar characters. His intellect did not tend to the strong grasp of realities; its taste was rather for the subtle refining of theories, the distilling of exquisite abstractions. His imagination personified what his understanding presented to it. It had nothing else to do. He displayed the same tendency of mind—sometimes negatively and sometimes positively—in his professedly religious inquiries. His belief went through three stages—first, materialism, then a sort of nihilism, then a sort of Platonism. In neither of them is the rule of the universe ascribed to a character: in the first and last it is ascribed to animated abstractions; in the second there is no universe at all. In neither of them is there any strong grasp of fact. The writings of the first period are clearly influenced by, and modelled on, Lucretius. He held the same abstract theory of nature—sometimes of half-personified atoms, moving hither and thither of themselves—at other times of a general pervading spirit of nature, holding the same relation to nature, as a visible object, that Arethusa the goddess bears to Arethusa the stream:

"The magic car moved on.
As they approached their goal
The coursers seemed to gather speed:
The sea no longer was distinguished; earth
Appeared a vast and shadowy sphere:
The sun's unclouded orb
Rolled through the black concave;
Its rays of rapid light
Parted around the chariot's swifter course,
And fell like ocean's feathery spray
Dashed from the boiling surge
Before a vessel's prow.

The magic car moved on.
Earth's distant orb appeared
The smallest light that twinkles in the heaven;
Whilst round the chariot's way
Innumerable systems rolled,
And countless spheres diffused
An ever-varying glory.
It was a sight of wonder: some
Were horned like the crescent moon;
Some shed a mild and silver beam
Like Hesperus o'er the western sea;
Some dash'd athwart with trains of flame,
Like worlds to death and ruin driven;
Some shone like suns, and, as the chariot passed,
Eclipsed all other light.

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Spirit of Nature! here,
In this interminable wilderness
Of worlds, at whose immensity
Even soaring fancy staggers,—
Here is thy fitting temple.
Yet not the lightest leaf
That quivers to the passing breeze
Is less instinct with thee:
Yet not the meanest worm
That lurks in graves and fattens on the dead
Less shares thy eternal breath.
Spirit of Nature! thou,
Imperishable as this scene,—
Here is thy fitting temple."

And he copied not only the opinions of Lucretius, but also his tone. Nothing is more remarkable than that two poets of the first rank should have felt a bounding joy in the possession of opinions which, if true, ought, one would think, to move an excitable nature to the keenest and deepest melancholy. That this life is all; that there is no God, but only atoms and a moulding breath; are singular doctrines to be accepted with joy; they only could have been so accepted by wild minds bursting with imperious energy, knowing of no law, "wreaking thoughts upon expression" of which they knew neither the meaning nor the result. From this stage Shelley's mind passed to another; but not immediately to one of greater belief. On the contrary, it was the doctrine of Hume which was called in to expel the doctrine of Epicurus. His previous teachers had taught him that there was nothing except matter: the Scotch sceptic met him at that point with the question—Is matter certain? Hume, as is well known, adopted the negative part from the theory of materialism and the theory of immaterialism, but rejected the positive side of both. He held, or professed to hold, that there was no substantial thing, either matter or mind; but only "sensations and impressions" flying about the universe, inhering in nothing and going nowhere. These, he said, were the only subjects of consciousness; all you felt was your feeling, and all you thought was your thought; the rest was only hypothesis. The notion that there was any "*you*" at all was a theory generally current among mankind, but not, unless proved, to be accepted by the philosopher. This doctrine, though little agreeable to the world in general, has an excellence in the eyes of youthful disputants; it is a doctrine which no one will admit, and which no one can disprove. Shelley accordingly accepted it; indeed, it was a better description of his universe than of most people's; his mind was filled with a swarm of ideas, fancies, thoughts, streaming on without his volition, without plan or order. He might be pardoned for fancying that they were all; he could not see the out-

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ward world for them; their giddy passage occupied him till he forgot himself. He has put down the theory in its barest form: "The most refined abstractions of logic conduct to a view of life which, though startling to the apprehension, is, in fact, that which the habitual sense of its repeated combinations has extinguished in us. It strips, as it were, the painted curtain from this scene of things. I confess that I am one of those who am unable to refuse my assent to the conclusions of those philosophers who assert that nothing exists but as it is perceived." And again: "The view of life presented by the most refined deductions of the intellectual philosophy is that of unity. Nothing exists but as it is perceived. The difference is merely nominal between those two classes of thought which are vulgarly distinguished by the names of ideas and of external objects. Pursuing the same thread of reasoning, the existence of distinct individual minds, similar to that which is employed in now questioning its own nature, is likewise found to be a delusion. The words, *I, you, they,* are not signs of any actual difference subsisting between the assemblage of thoughts thus indicated, but are merely marks employed to denote the different modifications of the one mind. Let it not be supposed that this doctrine conducts to the monstrous presumption that I, the person who now write and think, am that one mind. I am but a portion of it. The words, *I,* and *you,* and *they,* are grammatical devices invented simply for arrangement, and totally devoid of the intense and exclusive sense usually attached to them. It is difficult to find terms adequate to express so subtle a conception as that to which the intellectual philosophy has conducted us. We are on that verge where words abandon us; and what wonder if we grow dizzy to look down the dark abyss of how little we know!" On his wild nerves these speculations produced a great effect. Their thin acuteness excited his intellect; their blank result appalled his imagination. He was obliged to pause in the last fragment of one of his metaphysical papers, "dizzy from thrilling horror." In this state of mind he began to study Plato; and it is probable that in the whole library of philosophy there is no writer so suitable to such a reader. A common modern author, believing in mind and matter, he would have put aside at once as loose and popular. He was attracted by a writer who, like himself, in some sense did not believe in either—who supplied him with subtle realities different from either, at once to be extracted by his intellect and to be glorified by his imagination. The theory of Plato, that the all-apparent phenomena were unreal, he believed already; he had a craving to believe in something noble, beautiful, and difficult to understand; he was ready, therefore, to accept the rest of that theory, and to believe

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that these passing phenomena were imperfect types and resemblances—imperfect incarnations, so to speak—of certain immovable, eternal, archetypal realities. All his later writings are coloured by that theory, though in some passages the remains of the philosophy of the senses with which he commenced appear in odd proximity to the philosophy of abstractions with which he concluded. There is, perhaps, no allusion in Shelley to the *Phædrus;* but no one can doubt which of Plato's ideas would be most attractive to the nature we have described. The most valuable part of Plato he did not comprehend. There is in Shelley none of that unceasing reference to ethical consciousness and ethical religion which have for centuries placed Plato first among the preparatory preceptors of Christianity. The general doctrine is that

> "The one remains, the many change and pass;
> Heaven's light for ever shines, earth's shadows fly;
> Life, like a dome of many-coloured glass,
> Stains the white radiance of eternity,
> Until death tramples it to fragments."

The particular worship of the poet is paid to that one spirit whose

> "Plastic stress
> Sweeps through the dull dense world, compelling there
> All new successions to the forms they wear;
> Torturing th' unwilling dross that checks its flight
> To its own likeness, as each mass may bear;
> And bursting in its beauty and its might
> From trees, and beasts, and men, into the heaven's light."

It is evident that not even in this, the highest form of creed to which he ever clearly attained, is there any such distinct conception of a character as is essential to a real religion. The conception of God is not to be framed out of a single attribute. Shelley has changed the "idea" of beauty into a spirit, and this probably for the purposes of poetry; he has given it life and animal motion; but he has done no more: the "spirit" has no will, and no virtue: it is animated, but unholy; alive, but unmoral: it is an object of intense admiration; it is not an object of worship.

We have ascribed this quality of Shelley's writings to an abstract intellect; and in part, no doubt, correctly. Shelley had, probably by nature, such an intellect; it was self-enclosed, self-absorbed, teeming with singular ideas, remote from character and life; but so involved is human nature, that this tendency to abstraction, which we have spoken of as aggravating the consequences of his simple impulsive temperament, was itself aggravated by that temperament. It is a received opinion in metaphysics, that the idea of personality is identi-

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cal with the idea of will. A distinguished French writer has accurately expressed this: "Le pouvoir," says M. Jouffroy, "que l'homme a de s'emparer de ses capacités naturelles et de les diriger fait de lui une *personne;* et c'est parce que les *choses* n'exercent pas ce pouvoir en elles-mêmes, qu'elles ne sont que des choses. Telle est la véritable différence qui distingue les choses des personnes. Toutes les natures possibles sont douées de certaines capacités; mais les unes ont reçu par dessus les autres le privilége de se saisir d'elles-mêmes et de se gouverner: celles-là sont les personnes. Les autres en ont été privées, en sorte qu'elles n'ont point de part à ce qui se fait en elles: celles-là sont les choses. Leurs capacités ne s'en développent pas moins; mais c'est exclusivement, selon les lois auxquelles Dieu les a soumises, c'est Dieu qui gouverne en elles, il est la personne des choses, comme l'ouvrier est la personne de la montre. Ici la personne est hors de l'être; dans le sein même des choses, comme dans le sein de la montre, la personne ne se rencontre pas; on ne trouve qu'une série de capacités qui se meuvent aveuglément, sans que la nature qui en est douée sache même ce qu'elles font. Aussi ne peut-on demander compte aux choses de ce qui se fait en elles; il faut s'adresser à Dieu: comme on s'adresse à l'ouvrier et non à la montre, quand la montre va mal." And if this theory be true—and doubtless it is an approximation to the truth—it is evident that a mind ordinarily moved by simple impulse will have little distinct consciousness of personality. While thrust forward by such impulse, it is a mere instrument. Outward things set it in motion. It goes where they bid; it exerts no will upon them; it is, to speak expressively, a mere conducting thing. When such a mind is free from such impulse, there is even less will; thoughts, feelings, ideas, emotions, pass before it in a sort of dream. For the time it is a mere perceiving thing. In neither case is there a trace of voluntary character. If we want a reason for any thing, "il faut s'adresser à Dieu."

Shelley's political opinions were likewise the effervescence of his peculiar nature. The love of liberty is peculiarly natural to the simple impulsive mind. It feels irritated at the idea of a law; it fancies it does not need it: it really needs it less than other men. Government seems absurd—society an incubus. It has hardly patience to estimate particular institutions: it wants to begin again—to make a *tabula rasa* of all which men have created or devised; for they seem to have been constructed on a false system, for an object it does not understand. On this *tabula rasa* Shelley's abstract imagination proceeded to set up arbitrary monstrosities of "equality" and "love," which never will be realised among the children of men.

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Such a mind is clearly driven to self-delineation. Nature, no doubt, in some sense remains to it. A dreamy mind—a mind occupied intensely with its own thoughts—will often have a peculiarly intense apprehension of any thing which by the hard collision of the world it has been forced to observe. The scene stands out alone in the memory; is a refreshment from hot thoughts; grows with the distance of years. A mind like Shelley's, deeply susceptible to all things beautiful, has many pictures and images shining in its recollection which it recurs to, and which it is ever striving to delineate. Indeed, in such minds it is rather the picture in their mind which they describe than the original object; the "ideation," as some harsh metaphysicians call it, rather than the reality. A certain dreamlight is diffused over it; a wavering touch, as of interfering fancy or fading recollection. The landscape has not the hues of the real world; it is modified in the *camera obscura* of the self-enclosed intelligence. Nor can such a mind long endure the cold process of external delineation. Its own hot thoughts rush in; its favourite topic is itself and them. Shelley, indeed, as we observed before, carries this to an extent which no poet probably ever equalled. He described not only his character but his circumstances. We know that this is so in a large number of passages; if his poems were commented on by some one thoroughly familiar with the events of his life, we should doubtless find that it was so in many more. On one strange and painful scene his fancy was continually dwelling. In a gentle moment we have a dirge—

"The warm sun is failing, the bleak wind is wailing,
The bare boughs are sighing, the pale flowers are dying,
And the year
On the earth her deathbed, in a shroud of leaves, dead
Is lying.
Come months, come away,
From November to May,
In your saddest array:
Follow the bier
Of the dead cold year,
And like dim shadows watch by her sepulchre.

The chill rain is falling, the nipt worm is crawling,
The rivers are swelling, the thunder is knelling;
For the year
The blithe swallows are flown, and the lizards each gone
To his dwelling.
Come, months, come away;
Put on white, black, and gray;
Let your light sisters play—
Ye follow your bier
Of the dead cold year,
And make her grave green with tear on tear."

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In a frenzied mood he breaks forth into wildness:

> "She is still, she is cold
> On the bridal couch;
> One step to the white deathbed,
> And one to the bier,
> And one to the charnel—and one, O, where?
> The dark arrow fled
> In the noon.
>
> Ere the sun through heaven once more has roll'd,
> The rats in her heart
> Will have made their nest,
> And the worms be alive in her golden hair;
> While the spirit that guides the sun
> Sits throned in his flaming chair,
> She shall sleep."

There is no doubt that these and a hundred other similar passages allude to the death of his first wife; as melancholy a story as ever shivered the nerves of an excitable being. The facts are hardly known to us, but they are something like these: In very early youth Shelley had formed a half-fanciful attachment to a cousin, a Miss Harriett Grove, who is said to have been attractive, and to whom, certainly, his fancy often went back in later and distant years. How deep the feeling was on either side we do not know: she seems to have taken an interest in the hot singular dreams which occupied his mind—except only where her image might intrude—from which one might conjecture that she took unusual interest in him; she even wrote some chapters, or parts of some, in one of his boyish novels, and her parents probably thought the "Rosicrucian" could be endured as Shelley was the heir to land and a baronetcy. His expulsion from Oxford altered all this. Doubtless he had always in his family been thought "a singular young man," and they had waited in perplexity to see if the oddness would turn to unusual good or unusual evil. His atheistic treatise and its results seemed to show clearly the latter, and all communication with Miss Grove was instantly forbidden him. What she felt on the subject is not told us; probably some theistic and undreaming lover intervened, for she married in a short time. The despair of an excitable poet at being deprived of his mistress at the same moment that he was abandoned by his family, and in a measure by society, may be fancied, though it cannot be known. Captain Medwin observes: "Shelley, on this trying occasion, had the courage to live, in order that he might labour for one great object—the advancement of the human race and the amelioration of society; and strengthened himself in a resolution to devote his energies to this ultimate end, being prepared to endure every obloquy, to make every sacrifice for its accomplishment; and

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would," such is the captain's English, "if necessary, have died in the cause." It does not appear, however, that disappointed love took solely the very unusual form of philanthropy. By chance, whether with or without leave does not appear, he went to see his second sister, who was at school at a place called Balam Hill, near London; and while walking in the garden with her, "a Miss Westbrook passed them." She was a "handsome blonde young lady, nearly sixteen;" and Shelley was much struck. He found out that her name was "Harriett,"—as he, after his marriage, anxiously expresses it, with two t's. Harriett and he fell in love at once. She had the name of his first love; "fairer, though yet the same." After his manner, he wrote to her immediately. He was in the habit of doing this to people who interested him, either in his own or under an assumed name: and once, Captain Medwin says, carried on a long correspondence with Mrs. Hemans, then Miss Browne, under his (the captain's) name; but which he, the deponent, was not permitted to peruse. In Miss Westbrook's case the correspondence had a more serious consequence. Of her character we can only guess a little. She was, we think, an ordinary blooming young lady of sixteen. Shelley was an extraordinary young man of nineteen, rather handsome, very animated, and expressing his admiration a little intensely. He was doubtless much the most aristocratic person she had ever spoken to; for her father was a retired innkeeper, and Shelley had always the air of a man of birth. There is a vision, too, of an elder sister, who made "Harriett dear" very uncomfortable. On the whole, the result may be guessed. At the end of August 1811, we do not know the precise day, they were married at Gretna Green. Jests may be made on it; but it was no laughing matter in the life of the wife or the husband. Of the lady's disposition and mind we know nothing except from Shelley; a medium which must, under the circumstances, be thought a distorting one. We should conclude that she was capable of making many people happy, though not of making Shelley happy. There is an ordinance of nature at which men of genius are perpetually fretting, but which does more good than many laws of the universe which they praise: it is, that ordinary women ordinarily prefer ordinary men. "Genius," as Hazlitt would have said, "puts them out." It is so strange; it does not come into the room as usual; it says "such things:" once it forgot to brush its hair. The common female mind prefers usual tastes, settled manners, customary conversation, defined and practical pursuits. And it is a great good that it should be so. Nature has no wiser instinct. The average woman can make happy the average man; good health, easy cheerfulness, common charms, suffice.

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If Miss Westbrook had married an everyday person—a gentleman, suppose, in the tallow line—she would have been happy, and have made him happy. Her mind could have understood his life; her society would have been a gentle relief from unodoriferous pursuits. She had nothing in common with Shelley. His mind was full of eager thoughts, wild dreams, singular aspirations. The most delicate tact would probably have often failed, the nicest sensibility been jarred, the most entire affection erred, in dealing with such a being. A most peculiar character was required, to enter into such a rare union of curious qualities. Some eccentric men of genius have, indeed, felt, in the habitual tact and serene nothingness of ordinary women, a kind of trust and calm. They have admired an instinct of the world which they had not—a repose of mind they could not share. But this is commonly in later years. A boy of twenty thinks he knows the world; he is too proud and happy in his own eager and shifting thoughts to wish to contrast them with repose. The commonplaceness of life goads him: placid society irritates him. Bread is an incumbrance; upholstery tedious: he craves excitement; he wishes to reform mankind. You cannot convince him it is right to sew, in a world so full of sorrow and evil. Shelley was in this state; he hurried to and fro over England, pursuing theories, and absorbed in plans. He was deep in metaphysics; had subtle disproofs of all religion; wrote several poems, which would have been a puzzle to a very clever young lady. There were pecuniary difficulties besides: neither of the families had approved of the match, and neither were inclined to support the household. Altogether, no one can be surprised that in less than three years the hasty union ended in a "separation by mutual consent." The wonder is that it lasted so long. What her conduct was after the separation, is not very clear; there were "reports" about her at Bath—perhaps a loquacious place. She was not twenty, probably handsome, and not improbably giddy: being quite without evidence, we cannot judge what was rumour and what was truth. Shelley has not left us in similar doubt. After a year or two he travelled abroad with Mary, afterwards the second Mrs. Shelley, the daughter of Mary Woolstoncroft and William Godwin—names most celebrated in those times, and even now known for their anti-matrimonial speculations. Of their "six weeks' tour" abroad, in the year 1816, a record remains, and should be read by any persons who wish to learn what travelling was in its infancy. It was the year when the Continent was first thrown open to English travellers; and few probably adopted such singular means of locomotion as Shelley and his companions. First they tried walking, and had a very small ass to

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carry their portmanteau; then they tried a mule; then a *fiacre*, which drove away from them; afterwards they came to a raft. It was not, however, an unamusing journey. At an ugly and out-of-the-way chateau, near Brunen, Shelley began a novel, to be called *The Assassins*, which he never finished—probably never continued—after his return; but which still remains, and is one of the most curious and characteristic specimens of his prose style. It was a refreshing intellectual tour; one of the most pleasant rambles of his life. On his return he was met by painful intelligence. His wife had destroyed herself. Of her state of mind we have no evidence. She is said to have been deeply affected by the "reports" to which we have alluded; but whatever it was, Shelley felt himself greatly to blame. He had been instrumental in first dividing her from her family; had connected himself with her in a wild contract, from which neither could ever be set free; if he had not crossed her path, she might have been happy in her own way and in her own sphere. All this preyed upon his mind, and it is said he became mad; and whether or not his horror and pain went the length of actual frenzy, they doubtless approached that border-line of suffering excitement which divides the most melancholy form of sanity from the most melancholy form of insanity. In several poems he seems to delineate himself in the guise of a maniac:

"'Of his sad history
I know but this,' said Maddalo; 'he came
To Venice a dejected man, and fame
Said he was wealthy, or he had been so.
Some thought the loss of fortune wrought him woe;
But he was ever talking in such sort
As you do,—but more sadly:—he seem'd hurt,
Even as a man with his peculiar wrong,
To hear but of the oppression of the strong,
Or those absurd deceits (I think with you
In some respects, you know) which carry through
The excellent impostors of this earth
When they outface detection. He had worth,
Poor fellow! but a humorist in his way.'—
—'Alas, what drove him mad?'

'I cannot say:
A lady came with him from France; and when
She left him and returned, he wander'd then
About yon lonely isles of desert sand
Till he grew wild. He had no cash nor land
Remaining:—the police had brought him here—
Some fancy took him, and he would not bear
Removal, so I fitted up for him
Those rooms beside the sea, to please his whim;
And sent him busts, and books, and urns for flowers,
Which had adorned his life in happier hours,

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And instruments of music. You may guess,
A stranger could do little more or less
For one so gentle and unfortunate—
And those are his sweet strains, which charm the weight
From madmen's chains, and make this hell appear
A heaven of sacred silence, hushed to hear.'

'Nay, this was kind of you; he had no claim,
As the world says.'

'None but the very same
Which I on all mankind, were I, as he,
Fall'n to such deep reverse. His melody
Is interrupted now: we hear the din
Of madmen, shriek on shriek, again begin;
Let us now visit him: after this strain
He ever communes with himself again,
And sees and hears not any.'

Having said
These words, we called the keeper; and he led
To an apartment opening on the sea—
There the poor wretch was sitting mournfully
Near a piano, his pale fingers twined
One with the other; and the ooze and wind
Rushed through an open casement, and did sway
His hair, and started it with the brackish spray:
His head was leaning on a music-book,
And he was muttering; and his lean limbs shook;
His lips were pressed against a folded leaf,
In hue too beautiful for health, and grief
Smiled in their motions as they lay apart,
As one who wrought from his own fervid heart
The eloquence of passion: soon he raised
His sad meek face, and eyes lustrous and glazed,
And spoke,—sometimes as one who wrote and thought
His words might move some heart that heeded not,
If sent to distant lands;—and then as one
Reproaching deeds never to be undone,
With wondering self-compassion; then his speech
Was lost in grief, and then his words came each
Unmodulated and expressionless,—
But that from one jarred accent you might guess
It was despair made them so uniform:
And all the while the loud and gusty storm
Hissed through the window; and we stood behind,
Stealing his accents from the envious wind,
Unseen. I yet remember what he said
Distinctly—such impression his words made."

And casual illustrations—unconscious metaphors, showing a terrible familiarity—are borrowed from insanity in his subsequent works.

This strange story is in various ways deeply illustrative of his character. It shows how the impulsive temperament, not definitely intending evil, is hurried forward, so to say, *over* actions and crimes which would seem to indicate deep depravity,

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—which would do so in ordinary human nature, but which do not indicate in it any thing like the same degree of guilt. Driven by singular passion across a tainted region, it retains no taint; on a sudden it passes through evil, but preserves its purity. So curious is this character, that a record of its actions may read like a libel on its life.

To some the story may also suggest whether Shelley's nature was one of those most adapted for love in its highest form. It is impossible to deny that he loved with a great intensity; yet it was with a certain narrowness, and therefore a certain fitfulness. Possibly a somewhat wider nature, taking hold of other characters at more points,—fascinated as intensely, but more variously,—stirred as deeply, but through more complicated emotions,—is requisite for the highest and most lasting feeling. Passion, to be enduring, must be many-sided. Eager and narrow emotions urge like the gadfly of the poet: but they pass away; they are single; there is nothing to revive them. Various as human nature must be the passion which absorbs that nature into itself. Shelley's mode of delineating women has a corresponding peculiarity. They are well described; but they are described under only one aspect. Every one of his poems almost has a lady whose arms are white, whose mind is sympathising, and whose soul is beautiful. She has many names—Cythna, Asia, Emily; but these are only external disguises; she is indubitably the same person, for her character never varies. No character can be simpler. She is described as the ideal object of love in its most simple and elemental form; the pure object of the essential passion. She is a being to be loved in a single moment, with eager eyes and gasping breath; but you feel that in that moment you have seen the whole. There is nothing to come to afterwards. The fascination is intense, but uniform. There is not the ever-varying grace, the ever-changing expression of the unchanging charm, that alone can attract for all time the shifting moods of a various and mutable nature.

The works of Shelley lie in a confused state, like the *disjecta membra* of the poet of our boyhood. They are in the strictest sense "remains." It is absurd to expect from a man who died at thirty a long work of perfected excellence. All which at so early an age can be expected are fine fragments, casual expressions of single inspirations. Of these Shelley has written some that are nearly, and one or two perhaps that are quite, perfect. But he has not done more. It would have been better if he had not attempted so much. He would have done well to have heeded Goethe's caution to Eckerman: "Beware of attempting a large work. If you have a great work in your head, nothing else thrives near it, all other thoughts are repelled, and

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the pleasantness of life itself is for the time lost. What exertion and expenditure of mental force are required to arrange and round off a great whole; and then what powers, and what a tranquil undisturbed situation in life, to express it with the proper fluency! If you have erred as to the whole, all your toil is lost; and further, if, in treating so extensive a subject, you are not perfectly master of your material in the details, the whole will be defective, and censure will be incurred." Shelley did not know this. He was ever labouring at long poems: but he has left scarcely one which, as a whole, is worthy of him; you can point to none and say, This is Shelley. Even had he lived to an age of riper capacity, it may be doubted if a being so discontinuous, so easily hurried to and fro, would have possessed the settled, undeviating self-devotion that are necessary to a long and perfect composition. He had not, like Goethe, the cool shrewdness to watch for inspiration.

His success, as we have said, is in fragments; and the best of those fragments are lyrical. The very same isolation and suddenness of impulse which rendered him unfit for the composition of great works, rendered him peculiarly fit to pour forth on a sudden the intense essence of peculiar feeling "in profuse strains of unpremeditated art." Mr. Macaulay has said that the words "bard" and "inspiration," generally so meaningless when applied to modern poets, have a meaning when applied to Shelley. An idea, an emotion grew upon his brain; his breast heaved, his frame shook, his nerves quivered with the "harmonious madness" of imaginative concentration. "Poetry," he himself tells us, "is not, like reasoning, a power to be exerted according to the determination of the will. A man cannot say, 'I will compose poetry.' The greatest poet even cannot say it; for the mind in creation is as a fading coal, which some invisible influence, like an inconstant wind, awakens to transitory brightness; this power arises from within, like the colour of a flower which fades and changes as it is developed, and the conscious portions of our natures are unprophetic either of its approach or its departure. . . . Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the happiest and best minds. We are aware of evanescent visitations of thought and feeling sometimes associated with place or person, sometimes regarding our own mind alone, and always arising unforeseen and departing unbidden, but elevating and delightful beyond all expression: so that even in the desire and the regret they leave, there cannot but be pleasure, participating as it does in the nature of its object. It is as it were the interpenetration of a diviner nature through our own; but its footsteps are like those of a wind over the sea, which the coming calm erases, and whose traces remain only, as on the wrinkled

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sand which paves it." In verse, Shelley has compared the skylark to a poet; we may turn back the description on his own art and his own mind:

"Keen are the arrows
Of that silver sphere;
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not;
What is most like thee?
From rainbow-clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see,
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

* * * * * *

Like a high-born maiden
In a palace-tower,
Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower.

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view.

Like a rose embower'd
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflower'd,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves.

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous, and clear, and fresh, thy music doth surpass."

In most poets unearthly beings are introduced to express peculiar removed essences of lyrical rapture; but they are generally failures. Lord Byron tried this kind of composition in *Manfred*, and the result is an evident failure. In Shelley, such singing solitary beings are almost uniformly successful; while writing, his mind really for the moment was in the state in which theirs is supposed always to be. He loved attenuated ideas and abstracted excitement. In expressing their nature he had but to set free his own.

Human nature is not, however, long equal to this sustained

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effort of remote excitement. The impulse fails, imagination fades, inspiration dies away. With the skylark it is well:

> "With thy clear keen joyance
> Languor cannot be:
> Shadow of annoyance
> Never came near thee:
> Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety."

But in unsoaring human nature languor comes, fatigue palls, melancholy oppresses, melody dies away. The universe is not all blue sky; there is the thick fog and the heavy earth. "The world," says Mr. Emerson, "is mundane." A creeping sense of weight is part of the most aspiring nature. To the most thrilling rapture succeeds despondency, perhaps pain. To Shelley this was peculiarly natural. His dreams of reform, of a world which was to be, called up the imaginative ecstasy; his soul bounded forward into the future; but it is not possible even to the most abstracted and excited mind to place its happiness in the expected realisation of impossible schemes, and yet not occasionally be uncertain of those schemes. The rigid frame of society, the heavy heap of traditional institutions, the solid slowness of ordinary humanity, depress the aspiring fancy. "Since our fathers fell asleep all things continued as they were from the beginning." Occasionally we must think of our fathers. No man can always dream of ever altering all which is. It is characteristic of Shelley, that at the end of his most rapturous and sanguine lyrics there intrudes the cold consciousness of this world. So with his Grecian dreams:

> "A brighter Hellas rears its mountains
> From waves serener far;
> A new Peneus rolls its fountains
> Against the morning-star.
> Where fairer Tempes bloom, there sleep
> Young Cyclads on a sunnier deep;
> A loftier Argos cleaves the main,
> Fraught with a later prize;
> Another Orpheus sings again,
> And loves, and weeps, and dies:
> A new Ulysses leaves once more
> Calypso for his native shore."

But he ends:

> "O, cease! must hate and death return?
> Cease! must men kill and die?
> Cease! drain not to its dregs the urn
> Of bitter prophecy.
> The world is weary of the past—
> O, might it die or rest at last!"

In many of his poems the failing of the feeling is as beautiful as its short moment of hope and buoyancy.

The excellence of Shelley does not, however, extend equally

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over the whole domain of lyrical poetry. That species of art may be divided—not perhaps with the accuracy of science, but with enough for the rough purposes of popular criticism—into the human and the abstract. The sphere of the former is of course the actual life, passions, and actions of real men,—such are the war-songs of rude nations especially; in that early age there is no subject for art but natural life and primitive passion. In a later time, when from the deposit of the *débris* of a hundred philosophies, a large number of half-personified abstractions are part of the familiar thoughts and language of all mankind, there are new objects to excite the feelings,—we might even say there are new feelings to be excited; the rough substance of original passion is sublimated and attenuated till we hardly recognise its identity. Ordinarily and in most minds the emotion loses in this process its intensity, or much of it; but this is not universal. In some peculiar minds it is possible to find an almost dizzy intensity of excitement called forth by some fancied abstraction remote altogether from the eyes and senses of men. The love-lyric in its simplest form is probably the most intense expression of primitive passion; yet not in those lyrics where such intensity is the greatest,—in those of Burns, for example,—is the passion so dizzy, bewildering, and bewildered, as in the "Epipsychidion" of Shelley, the passion of which never came into the real world at all, was only a fiction founded on fact, and was wholly—and even Shelley felt it—inconsistent with the inevitable conditions of ordinary existence. In this point of view, and especially also taking account of his peculiar religious opinions, it is remarkable that Shelley should have taken extreme delight in the Bible as a composition. He is the least biblical of poets. The whole, inevitable, essential conditions of real life—the whole of its plain, natural joys and sorrows—are described in the Jewish literature as they are described no where else. Very often they are assumed rather than delineated; and the brief assumption is more effective than the most elaborate description. There is none of the delicate sentiment and enhancing sympathy which a modern writer would think necessary; the inexorable facts are dwelt on with a stern humanity which recognises human feeling though intent on something above it. Of all modern poets, Wordsworth shares the most in this peculiarity; perhaps he is the only recent one who has it at all. He knew the hills beneath whose shade "the generations are prepared:"

> "Much did he see of men,
> Their passions and their feelings: chiefly those
> Essential and eternal in the heart,
> That mid the simple form of rural life
> Exist more simple in their elements,
> And speak a plainer language."

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Shelley has nothing of this. The essential feelings he hoped to change; the eternal facts he struggled to remove. Nothing in human life to him was inevitable or fixed; he fancied he could alter it all. His sphere is the "unconditioned;" he floats away into an imaginary elysium or an expected utopia; beautiful and excellent of course, but having nothing in common with the absolute laws of the present world. Even in the description of mere nature the difference may be noted. Wordsworth describes this earth as we know it, with all its peculiarities; where there are moors and hills, where the lichen grows, where the slate-rock juts out. Shelley describes the universe. He rushes away among the stars; this earth is an assortment of imagery, he uses it to deck some unknown planet. He scorns "the smallest light that twinkles in the heavens." His theme is the vast, the infinite, the immeasurable. He is not of our home, nor homely; he describes not our world, but that which is common to all worlds—the Platonic idea of a world. Where it can, his genius soars from the concrete and real into the unknown, the indefinite, and the void.

Shelley's success in the abstract lyric would prepare us for expecting that he would fail in attempts at eloquence. The mind which bursts forward of itself into the inane, is not likely to be eminent in the composed adjustments of measured persuasion. A voluntary self-control is necessary to the orator—even when he declaims, he must only let himself go; a keen will must be ready, a wakeful attention at hand, to see that he does not say a word by which his audience will not be touched. The eloquence of "Queen Mab" is of that unpersuasive kind which is admired in the earliest youth, when things and life are unknown, when all that is intelligible is the sound of words.

Mr. Macaulay, in a passage to which we have referred already, speaks of Shelley as having, more than any other poet, many of the qualities of the great old masters; two of these he has especially. In the first place, his imagination is classical rather than romantic:—we should, perhaps, apologise for using words which have been used so often, but which hardly convey even yet a clear and distinct meaning; yet they seem the best for conveying a distinction of this sort. When we attempt to distinguish the imagination from the fancy, we find that they are often related as a beginning to an ending. On a sudden we do not know how a new image, form, idea, occurs to our minds; sometimes it is borne in upon us with a flash, sometimes we seem unawares to stumble upon it, and find it as if it had long been there: in either case the involuntary unanticipated appearance of this new thought or image is a primitive fact which we cannot analyse or account for. We say it originated in our imagination or creative faculty: but this is a mere

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expression of the completeness of our ignorance; we could only define the imagination as the faculty which produces such effects; we know nothing of it or its constitution. Again, on this original idea a large number of accessory and auxiliary ideas seem to grow or accumulate insensibly, casually, and without our intentional effort; the bare primitive form attracts a clothing of delicate materials—an adornment not altering its essence, but enhancing its effect. This we call the work of the fancy. An exquisite delicacy in appropriating fitting accessories is as much the characteristic excellence of a fanciful mind, as the possession of large, simple, bold ideas is of an imaginative one. The last is immediate; the first comes minute by minute; the distinction is like what one fancies between sculpture and painting. If we look at a delicate statue—a Venus or Juno—it does not suggest any slow elaborate process by which its expression was chiselled and its limbs refined; it seems a simple fact: we look, and require no account of it; it exists. The greatest painting suggests, not only a creative act, but a decorative process: day by day there was something new; we could watch the tints laid on, the dresses tinged, the perspective growing and growing. There is something statuesque about the imagination; there is the gradual complexity of painting in the most exquisite productions of the fancy. When we speak of this distinction, we seem almost to be speaking of the distinction between ancient and modern literature. The characteristic of the classical literature is the simplicity with which the imagination appears in it; that of modern literature is the profusion with which the most various adornments of the accessory fancy are thrown and lavished upon it. Perhaps no where is this more conspicuous than in the modern treatment of antique subjects. One of the most essentially modern of recent poets has an "Ode to a Grecian Urn:" it begins—

> "Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness!
> Thou foster-child of Silence and slow Time,
> Sylvan historian! who canst thus express
> A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:
> What leaf-fringed legend haunts about thy shape
> Of deities or mortals, or of both,
> In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
> What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
> What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
> What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?"

No ancient poet would have dreamed of writing thus. There would have been no indistinct shadowy warmth, no breath of surrounding beauty: his delineation would have been cold, distinct, chiselled like the urn itself. The use which such a poet as Keats makes of ancient mythology is exactly similar. He

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owes his fame to the inexplicable art with which he has breathed a soft tint over the marble forms of gods and goddesses, enhancing their beauty without impairing their chasteness. This kind of imagination is not peculiar to a mythological age. The growth of civilisation, at least in Greece, rather increased than diminished the imaginative bareness of the poetical art. It seems to attain its height in Sophocles. If we examine any of his greater passages, a principal beauty is their reserved simplicity. A modern reader almost necessarily uses them as materials for fancy: we are too used to little circumstance to be able to do without it. Take the passage in which Œdipus contrasts the conduct of his sons with that of his daughters:

> *ὦ πάντ' ἐκείνω τοῖς ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ νόμοις*
> *φύσιν κατειακασθέντε καὶ βίου τροφάς.*
> *ἐκεῖ γὰρ οἱ μὲν ἄρσενες κατὰ στέγας*
> *θακοῦσιν ἱστουργοῦντες, αἱ δὲ σύννομοι*
> *τἄξω βίου τροφεῖα πορσύνουσ' ἀεί.*
> *σφῷν δ', ὦ τέκν', οὓς μὲν εἰκὸς ἦν πονεῖν τάδε,*
> *κατ' οἶκον οἰκουροῦσιν ὥστε παρθένοι,*
> *σφὼ δ' ἀντ' ἐκείνων τἀμὰ δυστήνου κακὰ*
> *ὑπερπονεῖτον. ἡ μὲν ἐξ ὅτου νέας*
> *τροφῆς ἔληξε καὶ κατίσχυσεν δέμας,*
> *ἀεὶ μεθ' ἡμῶν δύσμορος πλανωμένη*
> *γερονταγωγεῖ, πολλὰ μὲν κατ' ἀγρίαν*
> *ὕλην ἄσιτος νηλίπους τ' ἀλωμένη,*
> *πολλοῖσι δ' ὄμβροις ἡλίου τε καύμασιν*
> *μοχθοῦσα τλήμων, δεύτερ' ἠγεῖται τὰ τῆς*
> *οἴκοι διαίτης, εἰ πατὴρ τροφὴν ἔχοι.*

What a contrast to the ravings of Lear! What a world of detail Shakespeare would have put into the passage! What talk of "sulphurous and thought-executing fires," "simulars of virtue," "pent-up guilts," and "the thick rotundity of the world"! "Decorum is the principal thing" in Sophocles. The conception of Œdipus is not

> "Crowned with rank fumiter and furrow weeds,
> With harlocks, hemlock, nettle, and cuckoo-flowers."

There are no "idle weeds" among the "sustaining corn." The conception of Lear is that of an old gnarled oak, gaunt and quivering in the stormy sky, with old leaves and withered branches tossing in the air, and all the complex growth of a hundred years creaking and nodding to its fall. That of Œdipus is the peak of Teneriffe, as we fancied it in our childhood, by itself and snowy, above among the stormy clouds, heedless of the angry winds and the desolate waves,—single, ascending, and alone. Or, to change the metaphor to one derived from an art where the same qualities of mind have produced kindred effects, ancient

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poetry is like a Grecian temple, with pure form and rising columns,—created, one fancies, by a single effort of a creative nature: modern literature seems to have sprung from the involved brain of a Gothic architect, and resembles a huge cathedral—the work of the perpetual industry of centuries—complicated and infinite in details; but by their choice and elaboration producing an effect of unity which is not inferior to that of the other, and is heightened by the multiplicity through which it is conveyed. And it seems to be this warmth of circumstance—this profusion of interesting detail—which has caused the name 'romantic' to be perseveringly applied to modern literature.

It is only necessary to open Shelley, to show how essentially classical in its highest efforts his art is. Indeed, although nothing can be further removed from the staple topics of the classical writers than the abstract lyric, yet their treatment is nearly essential to it. We have said, its sphere is in what the Germans call the unconditioned—in the unknown, immeasurable, and untrodden. It follows from this that we cannot know much about it. We cannot know detail in tracts we have never visited; the infinite has no form; the immeasurable no outline: that which is common to all worlds is simple. There is therefore no scope for the accessory fancy. With a single soaring effort imagination may reach her end: if she fail, no fancy can help her; if she succeed, there will be no petty accumulations of insensible circumstance in a region far above all things. Shelley's excellence in the abstract lyric is almost another phrase for the simplicity of his impulsive imagination.—He shows it on other subjects also. We have spoken of his bare treatment of the ancient mythology. It is the same with his treatment of nature. In the description of the celestial regions quoted before—one of the most characteristic passages in his writings—the details are few, the air thin, the lights distinct. We are conscious of an essential difference if we compare the "Ode to the Nightingale" in Keats, for instance—such verses as

> "I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
> Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs;
> But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
> Wherewith the seasonable month endows
> The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild,
> White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine,
> Fast-fading violets cover'd up in leaves,
> And mid-May's eldest child,
> The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
> The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.
>
> Darkling I listen; and for many a time
> I have been half in love with easeful death,
> Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
> To take into the air my quiet breath;

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Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy.
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod."

—with the conclusion of the "Ode to the Skylark"—

"Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,—
I know not how thy joy we ever could come near.

Better than all measures
Of delight and sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know;
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now."

We can hear that the poetry of Keats is a rich, composite, voluptuous harmony; that of Shelley a clear single ring of penetrating melody.

Of course, however, this criticism requires limitation. There is an obvious sense in which Shelley is a fanciful, as contra-distinguished from an imaginative, poet. These words, being invented for the popular expression of differences which can be remarked without narrow inspection, are apt to mislead us when we apply them to the exact results of a near and critical analysis. Besides the use of the word "fancy" to denote the power which adorns and amplifies the product of the primitive imagination, we also employ it to denote the weaker exercise of the faculty which itself creates those elementary products. We use the word "imaginative" only for strong, vast, imposing, interesting conceptions: we use the word "fanciful" when we have to speak of smaller and weaker creations, which amaze us less at the moment and affect us more slightly afterwards. Of course, metaphysically speaking, it is not likely that there will be found to be any distinction; the faculty which creates the most attractive ideas is doubtless the same as that which creates the less attractive. Common language marks the distinction, because common people are impressed by the contrast between what affects them much and what affects them little; but it is no evidence of the entire difference of the latent agencies. Speech, as usual, refers to sensations, and not to occult causes. Of fancies of this sort Shelley is full: whole poems—as the "Witch of Atlas"—are composed of nothing else. Living a

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good deal in, and writing a great deal about, the abstract world, it was inevitable that he should often deal in fine subtleties, affecting very little the concrete hearts of real men. Many pages of his are, in consequence, nearly unintelligible, even to good critics of common poetry. The air is too rarefied for hardy and healthy lungs: these like, as Lord Bacon expressed it, "to work upon stuff." From his habitual choice of slight and airy subjects, Shelley may be called a fanciful, as opposed to an imaginative, poet; from his bare delineations of great objects, his keen expression of distinct impulses, he should be termed an imaginative, rather than a fanciful, one.

Some of this odd combination of qualities Shelley doubtless owed to the structure of his senses. By one of those singular results which constantly meet us in metaphysical inquiry, the imagination and fancy are singularly influenced by the bodily sensibility. One might have fancied that the faculty by which the soul soars into the infinite, and sees what it cannot see with the eye of the body, would have been peculiarly independent of that body. But the reverse is the case. Vividness of sensation seems required to awaken, delicacy to define, copiousness to enrich, the visionary faculty. A large experience proves that a being who is blind to this world will be blind to the other; that a coarse expectation of what is not seen will follow from a coarse perception of what is seen. Shelley's sensibility was vivid, but peculiar. Hazlitt used to say, "he had seen him; and did not like his looks." He had the thin keen excitement of the fanatic student; not the broad, natural, enjoying energy which Hazlitt expected from a poet. The diffused life of genial enjoyment, which was common to Scott and to Shakespeare, was quite out of his way. Like Mr. Emerson, he would have wondered they could be content with a "mean and jocular life." In consequence, there is no varied imagery from human life in his poetry. He was an abstract student, anxious about deep philosophies; and he had not that settled, contemplative, allotted acquaintance with external nature which is so curious in Milton, the greatest of studious poets. The exact opposite, however, to Shelley, in the nature of his sensibility, is Keats. That great poet used to pepper his tongue, "to enjoy in all its grandeur the cool flavour of delicious claret." When you know it, you seem to read it in his poetry. There is the same luxurious sentiment; the same poise on fine sensation. Shelley was the reverse of this; he was a water-drinker; his verse runs quick and chill, like a pure crystal stream. The sensibility of Keats was attracted too by the spectacle of the universe; he could not keep his eye from seeing, or his ears from hearing, the glories of it. All the beautiful objects of nature reappear by name in his poetry. The abstract idea of beauty is

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for ever celebrated in Shelley; it haunted his soul. But it was independent of special things; it was the general surface of beauty which lies upon all things. It was the smile of the universe and the expression of the world; it was not the vision of a land of corn and wine. The nerves of Shelley quivered at the idea of loveliness; but no coarse sensation obtruded particular objects upon him. He was left to himself with books and reflection.

So far, indeed, from Shelley having a peculiar tendency to dwell on and prolong the sensation of pleasure, he has a perverse tendency to draw out into lingering keenness the torture of agony. Of his common recurrence to the dizzy pain of mania we have formerly spoken; but this is not the only pain. The nightshade is commoner in his poems than the daisy. The nerve is ever laid bare; as often as it touches the open air of the real world, it quivers with subtle pain. The high intellectual impulses which animated him are too incorporeal for human nature; they begin in buoyant joy, they end in eager suffering.

In style, said Mr. Wordsworth—in workmanship, we think his expression was—Shelley is one of the best of us. This too, we think, was the second of the peculiarities to which Mr. Macaulay referred when he said that Shelley had, more than any recent poet, some of the qualities of the great old masters. The peculiarity of his style is its intellectuality; and this strikes us the more from its contrast with his impulsiveness. He had something of this in life. Hurried away by sudden desires as he was in his choice of ends, we are struck with a certain comparative measure and adjustment in his choice of means. So in his writings: over the most intense excitement, the grandest objects, the keenest agony, the most buoyant joy, he throws an air of subtle mind. His language is minutely and acutely searching; at the dizziest height of meaning the keenness of the words is greatest. As in mania, so in his descriptions of it, the acuteness of the mind seems to survive the mind itself. It was from Plato and Sophocles, doubtless, that he gained the last perfection in preserving the accuracy of the intellect when treating of the objects of the imagination; but in its essence it was a peculiarity of his own nature. As it was the instinct of Byron to give in glaring words the gross phenomena of evident objects, so it was that of Shelley to refine the most inscrutable with the curious nicety of an attenuating metaphysician. In the wildest of ecstasies his self-anatomising intellect is equal to itself.

There is much more which might be said, and which ought to be said, of Shelley; but our limits are reached. We have not attempted a complete criticism; we have only aimed to show how some of the peculiarities of his works and life may be traced to the peculiarity of his nature.

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Art. V.—DE FOE AS A NOVELIST.

Bohn's British Classics. De Foe's Works. Vols. I.-IV. London, Henry G. Bohn. 1854, 1855.

The modern novel is the characteristic literature of modern times. It is not difficult to detect some of the leading sources of its growth in the conditions and tendencies of modern society, especially in England. Increase of personal liberty has given increased scope and a greater common importance to individual life and character. A diminishing political and social restraint over men's lives, and a less urgent necessity for active personal engagement in political affairs, combined with a less formal and exigent code of manners in society, have endowed men with both more room and more leisure for the conscious determination of their own lives and characters. The sphere of human duty is not less wide and important than it used to be: but it is more voluntary—less under the law; its claims are less engrossing and less exacting; the relations to God are less distracted—less mediate—more comprehensive. A man may either live that he may act in a certain way, or he may so act that he may live a certain life and be a certain sort of thing. The facilities for the latter arrangement of existence are probably greater now in England than they have ever hitherto been in the world; and the effects of a growing tendency in this direction are visible enough in our literature. An increased interest in our own characters has naturally given us an increased interest in the individual characters of others; and the examination and representation of character has been the most universal object of modern imaginative literature, its most special characteristic, and its highest excellence. The limits of the drama have not sufficed for its wants: it requires to display not only statical forms of character, but its development under the most varied and protracted circumstances; and an intimate union of the dramatic and narrative modes of delineation has been contrived, to give scope to the new requirements of art. The same tendencies may be observed in other sorts of writing. They have somewhat warped history from its true model and objects, and they have given a higher and truer character to biography. The distinguishing use of history lies in the light it throws on the political and social nature of man. Its lessons are for the statesman and the citizen. It investigates, or should do, the principles of common human action in communities, and furnishes its students with comprehensive grounds for judging the

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tendencies and estimating the value of legislative changes. Its function is to supply men with guiding knowledge in their capacity as the members of a state. The object of biography is, or should be, to furnish, as complete as possible a view of the whole character and life of its subject, both for its own interest, and as making additions to that sort of knowledge of individual men which may subserve others in moulding their own individual lives and characters. Modern history, as we might expect, tends too much to become biographical in its character; while biography is far less content than it used to be with stringing together the events of a man's life, and aims at as searching as possible an examination and exhibition of the whole nature of the man. The same reasons that have tended to make character a more universal subject of study have also tended to give it a form which has made newer and more exhaustive methods of treating it more necessary for its exhibition. There are fewer sharp diversities in character than there used to be. Men differ, not less completely, but less prominently, than they used to do: there is less one-sided individual development. When men are sharply constrained by an external power, which can grasp only a part of their nature, the very pressure there will make other parts of their nature start out in strange and abnormal excrescences. The more external restraint is removed, the more rounded and the more alike in their general aspects will be the forms of the single particles which together constitute society: differences of character become less apparent on the surface, and a finer discrimination, a more comprehensive insight, and a more delicate expression, are necessary to delineate its diversities.

Modern taste, accustomed to this more refined school of art, finds little to gratify it in the novels of De Foe. Neither his own genius nor that of his times was favourable to a compliance with its more recondite demands. The reigns of William and of Anne were any thing rather than adapted for the unhampered growth and quiet contemplation of character. They were filled with restless petty action. The liberties of the nation itself had been secured; but the respective rights and claims of the several parties within the nation were never more undecided. It was a time of discord and jangling. Arbitrary invasions on the general liberty of the subject were replaced by harassing restrictions on the free action of certain classes; and dangers important enough to unite the mass of the people in resistance had been replaced by a petty tyranny of disqualifications and fines over discordant minorities, which led an anxious life of mixed warfare and occasional conformity. In such times measures were more interesting than men, events occupied attention more than the study of cha-

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racter. And in such a time the natural bent of De Foe's genius to occupy itself with action and practical affairs was thoroughly confirmed by a long life of thankless political effort, conducted from so independent a point of view as to expose him to the persecution of both the great parties of the day.

Human existence, in all its varied forms and conditions, was the one thing which interested him: but he busied himself rather with what men were doing than with what they were; with how they influenced the external world, rather than with how the external world influenced them. The modes of human life had a curious fascination for him. The way in which people lived and did things, and other imagined ways in which they might live and do the same or other things, were the matters which occupied his attention. The administration of affairs, the conduct of wars, the management of trade, the control of a household,—these were his favourite objects of contemplation. Great or small, they pleased him alike. The main labours, on which he spent nearly forty years of his life, were works of survey and practical suggestion in political and social affairs, often the most intricate and important; but he could turn with equal relish to discuss the "pride, insolence, and exorbitant wages of our women-servants" (though "they were pleased to say he undervalued himself to take notice of them"), and to make "proposals for the amendment of the same." Even the most private and delicate arcana of domestic life were not too sacred to escape his curious observation and didactic suggestions.

His novels set forth not so much the life of a particular person as some particular mode of life. They tell us something that happened, or how things happened. Often the hero is a mere mouth-piece for a mass of adventures, told for their *own* sakes, and carrying their interest entirely in themselves, not deriving any from the light they throw on the supposititious narrator. The *Memoirs of a Cavalier* is De Foe's notion of how the civil wars were carried on. *Captain Carleton* is only a device to tell us what he knows of some of the Low-Country campaigns, of Spain, and of Lord Peterborough's exploits there; and the *History of the Plague* is interesting as history, not as a personal narrative. Of these sort of things one asks, as the children do, "But is it all true?" It professes to be so; every artifice is resorted to to make us believe it authentic; and there can be no doubt that De Foe deliberately intended to pass these narratives off upon the world as literally true, and to obtain the advantage of the interest so excited. But as soon as you get to learn that they are not authentic their main interest is gone. The great mass of the facts may be true, but you have not the slightest clue to enable you to distinguish between the truth and falsehood of any of the minor and

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characteristic details: we can be sure only of those broad facts which we know to be true from other sources. In the whole range of imaginative literature there is nothing less satisfactory and more useless than this inextricable mingling of truths and figments. It is not history; it is not fiction. Where, as in Sir Walter Scott, you have an imaginative central interest confessedly fictitious, for which the real facts of history are used to afford a field, their own interest being only a subsidiary one, there, though the historical view may be distorted, and the facts inaccurate, they still have their true artistic bearing. There is a story; and if that be good, we care comparatively little whether the historic material be in strict accordance with fact. We know Cromwell was not as he is represented in *Woodstock*; the *Talisman* probably contains a not very correct view of Richard Cœur de Lion; and one would not be willing implicitly to accept all Sir Walter's views of parties and characters in Scottish history; but we don't read him for history, and we willingly accept for the time any view of historic personages which, without being glaringly inaccurate, subserves the interests of his romances. Where, on the other hand, a writer forms his own distinct conception of an historic personage or event, basing it on knowledge, and making it as true to the reality as he can, he may legitimately, perhaps, give play to his fancy in inventing minor incidents and traits for the purpose of reproducing his conception in a work of art with greater vividness and completeness than he could possibly do, were he to confine himself to the bare ascertained facts. If a man is writing history or biography, such a latitude is clearly not to be tolerated, though often taken; but such romances as *Harold* and *Rienzi* are doubtless permissible. When we peruse them, we lean on the author, and trust him just as far as we choose; and we know ourselves to be reading, not history, but the impression history has left on a man of genius. But when a man bases the interest of his narrative on a mass of minute details about the real affairs of the world, professedly gathered by an eye-witness, the pleasure you derive from it is founded on the belief you have in its exact truth; and as soon as you find that the Cavalier who gives you the benefit of his personal experiences was really a tradesman in London of a generation later, the book loses its value. The element of invention destroys the interest you would have had in it as a record of fact, and the inextricable element of real fact destroys your pleasure in the invention. You wonder at it, and are perplexed in the perusal; if it retains any interest at all, it is due to the measure of probability that in the main it is still true.

And in De Foe's case this probability is very strong. His intense love for facts, and his very accurate and comprehensive

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knowledge and wide experience of the world of men, made him of all writers the one most able to give a true picture of, or at any rate a collection of true incidents relating to, any of the events either of his own times or of those sufficiently close to survive in the memory of the actors or their immediate descendants. On the other hand, his love of invention, his skill in giving the exactest air of reality to his fancied incidents, and his utter want of scruple in palming them off as truths, leave it quite uncertain in what proportion such narratives as the *History of the Plague* consist of real incidents, and in what of manufactured ones so closely resembling the others as not to be distinguishable from them by any test we now have it in our power to apply. Once resigning yourself to this inevitable confusion of truth and fiction, or rather consoling yourself with the reflection that De Foe's inventions are in such close harmony with the facts that surround them, that we may almost accept the whole as true, and the graphic, matter-of-fact, direct, unadorned narrative has an irresistible charm. It is admirably adapted for the history of such an event as the Plague, whose reality leaves the uninformed imagination behind, whose facts are more strange and frightful than the fancy, unaided by a knowledge of the reality, could ever have summoned up. In such cases, the plain bare recital of things just as they actually happened, has a tragic power superior to any that genius, except perhaps of the very highest order, could confer upon them. We are comparatively familiar with the horrors of the time and its terrors; with Solomon Eagle, with his pan of burning coals on his head, "denouncing of judgment upon the city in a frightful manner;" and with the clergyman who went every evening through Whitechapel streets, repeating continually that passage from the Liturgy, "Spare us, good Lord; spare thy people whom thou hast redeemed with thy most precious blood." We have heard "the fatal bellman," and the rumble of the dead-cart through the darkness thick with pestilence; have stood at the edge of the horrid pit, with its row of candles round it, and its busy and desperate buriers; have seen the dead encumbering the highway, and the dying bursting like frantic ghosts from the imprisonment of their houses;—but to give an impression of quiet desolation, we know nothing like De Foe's account of the solitary waterman, left alone among his dead neighbours, and labouring for the support of his stricken wife and family.

"Much about the same time I walked out into the fields towards Bow; for I had a great mind to see how things were managed in the river, and among the ships; and as I had some concern in shipping, I had a notion that it had been one of the best ways of securing oneself from the infection to have retired into a ship." And musing how to

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satisfy my curiosity in that point, I turned away over the fields, from Bow to Bromley, and down to Blackwall, to the stairs that are there for landing or taking water.

Here I saw a poor man walking on the bank or sea-wall, as they call it, by himself. I walked awhile also about, seeing the houses all shut up; at last I fell into some talk, at a distance, with this poor man. First I asked how people did thereabouts. 'Alas! sir,' says he, 'almost desolate,—all dead or sick; here are very few families in this part, or in that village,' pointing at Poplar, 'where half of them are not dead already, and the rest sick.' Then he, pointing to one house, 'They are all dead,' said he; 'and the house stands open, nobody dares go into it. A poor thief,' says he, 'ventured in to steal something; but he paid dear for his theft, for he was carried to the churchyard too, last night.' Then he pointed to several other houses. 'There,' says he, 'they are all dead, the man and his wife and five children. There,' says he, 'they are shut up, you see a watchman at the door;' and so of other houses. 'Why,' says I, 'what do you here all alone?' 'Why,' says he, 'I am a poor desolate man; it hath pleased God I am not yet visited, though my family is, and one of my children dead.' 'How do you mean, then,' said I, 'that you are not visited?' 'Why,' says he, 'that is my house,' pointing to a very low boarded house, 'and there my poor wife and two children live,' said he, 'if they may be said to live, for my wife and one of the children are visited; but I do not come at them.' And with that word I saw the tears run very plentifully down his face; and so they did down mine too, I assure you.

'But,' said I, 'why do you not come at them? How can you abandon your own flesh and blood?' 'O, sir,' says he, 'the Lord forbid; I do not abandon them, I work for them as much as I am able; and, blessed be the Lord, I keep them from want.' And with that I observed he lifted up his eyes to heaven with a countenance that presently told me I had happened on a man that was no hypocrite, but a serious, religious, good man; and his ejaculation was an expression of thankfulness, that, in such a condition as he was in, he should be able to say his family did not want. 'Well,' says I, 'honest man, that is a great mercy, as things go now with the poor. But how do you live, then; and how are you kept from the dreadful calamity that is now upon us all?' 'Why, sir,' says he, 'I am a waterman, and there is my boat,' says he, 'and the boat serves me for a house; I work in it in the day, and I sleep in it in the night; and what I get I lay it down upon that stone,' says he, showing me a broad stone on the other side of the street, a good way from his house; 'and then,' says he, 'I halloo and call to them till I make them hear, and they come and fetch it.'

'Well, friend,' says I, 'but how can you get money as a waterman? Does any body go by water these times?' 'Yes, sir,' says he, 'in the way I am employed there does. Do you see there,' says he, 'five ships lie at anchor?' pointing down the river a good way below the town; 'and do you see,' says he, 'eight or ten ships lie at the chain there, and at anchor yonder?' pointing above the town. 'All those ships

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have families on board, of their merchants and owners and such-like, who have locked themselves up, and live on board, close shut in, for fear of the infection; and I tend on them, to fetch things for them, carry letters, and do what is absolutely necessary, that they may not be obliged to come on shore; and every night I fasten my boat on board one of the ship's boats, and there I sleep by myself; and, blessed be God, I am preserved hitherto.'

'Well,' said I, 'friend, but will they let you come on board after you have been on shore here, when this has been such a terrible place, and so infected as it is?'

'Why, as to that,' said he, 'I very seldom go up the ship-side, but deliver what I bring to their boat, or lie by the side, and they hoist it on board; if I did, I think they are in no danger from me, for I never go into any house on shore, or touch any body, no, not of my own family; but I fetch provisions for them.'

'Nay,' says I, 'but that may be worse, for you must have those provisions of somebody or other; and since all this part of the town is so infected, it is dangerous so much as to speak with any body; for the village,' said I, 'is as it were the beginning of London, though it be at some distance from it.'

'That is true,' added he; 'but you do not understand me right. I do not buy provisions for them here, I row up to Greenwich, and buy fresh meat there; and sometimes I row down the river to Woolwich, and buy there; then I go to single farm-houses on the Kentish side, where I am known, and buy fowls, and eggs, and butter, and bring to the ships as they direct me, sometimes one, sometimes the other. I seldom come on shore here; and I came only now to call my wife, and hear how my little family do, and give them a little money which I received last night.'

'Poor man,' said I; 'and how much hast thou gotten for them?'

'I have gotten four shillings,' said he, 'which is a great sum, as things go now with poor men; but they have given me a bag of bread too, and a salt fish, and some flesh; so all helps out.'

'Well,' said I, 'and have you given it them yet?'

'No,' said he; 'but I have called, and my wife has answered that she cannot come out yet, but in half an hour she hopes to come, and I am waiting for her. Poor woman!' says he, 'she is brought sadly down; she has had a swelling, and it is broke, and I hope she will recover, but I fear the child will die; but it is the Lord!'—Here he stopped, and wept very much.

'Well, honest friend,' said I, 'thou hast a sure comforter, if thou hast brought thyself to be resigned to the will of God; He is dealing with us all in judgment.'

'O, sir,' says he, 'it is infinite mercy if any of us are spared; and who am I to repine?'

'Sayest thou so?' said I; 'and how much less is my faith than thine!' And here my heart smote me, suggesting how much better this poor man's foundation was, on which he stayed in the danger, than mine; that he had nowhere to fly; that he had a family to bind him to at-

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tendance, which I had not. And mine was mere presumption, his a true dependence, and a courage resting on God; and yet, that he used all possible caution for his safety.

I turned a little way from the man, while these thoughts engaged me; for, indeed, I could no more refrain from tears than he."

Something similar to these quasi-historical pieces are such works as *Captain Singleton*, and the *New Voyage round the World;* but they differ from them in their interest lying in the invention displayed in fictitious narrative, to which a basis only of reality is given; and though the boundary which divides the two is as much obscured as possible, they are sufficiently distinguishable in the main; and while we look on the curious incidental revelations as to the trade in the Spanish seas and South-American settlements as no doubt embodying reliable information of its kind, and on the general picture of Singleton's career as giving us some insight (gathered probably from De Foe's confabulations with old Dampier, with whom he used to talk over these matters) into the sea-life of the times, we are not in danger of being misled to believe in those pearl-gatherings in undiscovered and undiscoverable South-Sea islands, or that marvellous journey across the continent of Africa.

The proper novels of De Foe—*Roxana, Moll Flanders, Colonel Jack,* and above all, the first part of *Robinson Crusoe*—are of a much higher class. They are pure fictions; any elements of fact which may be included in them being, as it were, entirely dissolved and incorporated in a homogeneous work of imagination. The most marked feature in them, the one which first strikes every reader that looks at them, is their reality, their life-likeness. Perhaps this quality would have been less remarked had it been more balanced by other qualities more or less common in works of fiction. As it is, it stands sharply out as the characteristic of De Foe, and is the index to a genius not more remarkable for its wonderful power in this direction than it is for its absolute deficiencies in another. No where else does our literature show the trace of an imagination at once so vivid and so curiously limited. It is as if he had just one-half of that faculty we commonly call by this name. The imagination of Shakespeare is a universal solvent; at its touch the combined elements in man and circumstance fly apart, and reveal their secret and innermost constituent nature. This analytical power of genius,—a power, however, not of reasoning, but of insight,—furnishes the reservoir from which spring the fountains of creative genius; the more piercing that power, the clearer, the deeper, the more shining will be the knowledge it amasses, and thence the more fresh, the more vivid, the more true the creations that are informed by it. With this searching insight, dividing

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like a sword the spirit and body of things, a great poet unites a passionate interest in concrete wholes, the realities of the created world, the very things which actually do exist; and, out of the resources of his penetrative genius, to create new things like the old is the highest ambition of his nature. Every artistic mind grasps at individual wholes; but not to every one is given this power to reproduce them in the complex reality in which they exist in the living world. The most common poetic power is that which, by intermittent exertions of the faculty of insight or the sense of loveliness, grasps some fragment of the beauty of the universe and shakes out its hidden gold, or gathers some flying whisper of the world's harmonies and echoes it back in human language which illustrates some working passion; gives a picture to some fleeting landscape, a voice to a sentiment, a mood, or an aspiration; or freezes into language subtler than marble some passing incident as it sweeps swiftly down the never-returning current of time. These are simply expressive, and scarcely in any true sense creative poets. Others have a passion for creation, without a strong sense of the beauty of concrete wholes. These personify abstract emotions, dwell among ideas as contrasted with things; if they create a man, they make him only the incarnation of a single passion, or of a set of opinions and feelings; they don't feel that this is defective, that they are vivifying phantoms which want flesh and blood; their imagination does not grasp at a passionate man, but at passions which it endows with the attributes of man. Such a genius delights in allegory more or less transparent. It rushes into personification—often of the thinnest description. Collins attempted a drama—he might as well have tried to square the circle; the idea of a man never once probably presented itself to his mind; yet he could not help wrapping up in a hasty sketchy personification every idea that presented itself to him. When the traveller in the desert is likely to want water, he says

> "Bethink thee, Hassan, where shall thirst assuage,
> When fails this cruise, his unrelenting rage."

Spenser was a genius of this order; he is most at home and at his best when he is expending the glorious richness of his fancy in giving external form and appropriate environment to a passion or a vice, or some yet more abstract idea—as in his fine procession of Love, or that description of Mammon—

> "An uncouth savage and uncivil wight,
> Of griesly hew and fowle ill-favour'd sight;
> His face with smoke was tand and eies were bleard,
> His head and beard with sout were ill bedight,
> His cole-blacke hands did seeme to have ben seard
> In smythe's fire-spitting forge, and nayles like clawes appeard.

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His yron cote, all overgrowne with rust,
Was underneath enveloped with gold;
Whose glistring glosse, darkned with filthy dust,
Well yet appeared to have beene of old
A work of rich entayle and curious mould,
Woven with antickes and wyld ymagery;
And in his lap a masse of coyne he told,
And turned upside downe, to feede his eye
And covetous desire with his huge threasury."

By the wayside leading to which

"There sat infernale Paine
And fast beside him sat tumultuous Strife;
The one in hand an yron whip did strayne,
The other brandished a bloody knife;
And both did gnash their teeth, and both did threaten life.

On th' other side in one consort there sate
Cruell Revenge, and rancorous Despight,
Disloyall Treason, and hart-burning Hate;
But gnawing Gealosy, out of their sight
Sitting alone, his bitter lips did bight;
And trembling Feare still to and fro did fly,
And found no place where safe he shroud him might:
Lamenting Sorrow did in darknes lye;
And Shame his ugly face did hide from living eye."

But Spenser's Red-Cross Knights, his Artigalls, his Guyons, are only coats of armour inspired with special ideas; even the girl-huntress Belphœbe, his loveliest portraiture, is but the fair embodiment of fresh woodland virginity and pure animal spirits. Shelley, more intellectual, more subtle, yet less broad, was a poet of the same order, exercising his imagination on the qualities of things and facts, never on things and facts themselves.

Now De Foe is the very reverse of this turn of mind, and stands in striking contrast to it. His genius is still more one-sided, and occupies just the ground which is left bare by such poets as Spenser and Shelley. He has nothing whatever of the solvent power. The strange underlying forces and essences which these minds love to contemplate as the component elements of the world have no interest for him. He abides in the concrete; he has no analytical perception whatever. Never was there a man to whom a yellow primrose was less of any thing more than a yellow primrose. He is always occupied with the absolute existent realities of the world; with men as he saw them move in actual life; with facts as they actually happened. He never conceives abstract passions: his only idea of anger is a particular man in a passion. He has an enormous reconstructive and a very narrow creative imagination. He takes up things just as he finds them; and when he wants to create, he re-sorts them, or at most makes others exactly like them. He loses much by these limits to his nature. What he gains on the other side is that

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life-likeness we spoke of in his art: the narrow range of his vision is compensated by its vividness. It is a mistake to say that the wonderful power he has of convincing you that his characters really lived in the flesh, and that all he tells you did really happen just as he says it did, arises from the minuteness of his detail. It is not the detail that causes the distinctness of the reflection in the reader's mind; it is the sharpness of the original image. A mind like De Foe's works by details; it is one of its defects that it does so. A greater genius can flash out as sharp and full an image of a concrete man as any of De Foe's, and unencumbered with useless minutiæ. It can at once seize the very essence of some special attribute of human nature, and embody it in a complete and individual man. It can give you Claudio, Angelo, Lucio, Isabella, within the limits of five acts; and in doing so it furnishes, under stringent restrictions of form and in limited space, a greater variety of character than can be found within the whole range of De Foe's novels, and leaves as distinct an image of each man as we can form of the heroes of his most laboured autobiographical narratives. We don't say as familiar; but as distinct and as complete. De Foe thus arrives by means of details at a result which may be reached independently of them; and his power lies not in his love of minute circumstance, but in the close and tenacious grasp of his imagination—in the constant and distinct presence before his own mind of the conception that controls and guides his minutiæ. Richardson is far more detailed in his narration than De Foe, far more universally circumstantial, more diffuse, if possible, more tiresome; every matter that he has occasion to handle, whether important or unimportant, is elaborated with the same patient microscopic attention; he is thrice as tedious as De Foe; and yet his characters are infinitely inferior in life-likeness. Lovelace is a character more striking and more complex than Roxana or Robinson Crusoe; but you do not believe in his existence in the same way: he is more of a man in a book. De Foe's detail is a more partial and discriminating one than that of Richardson. True he loves it for its own sake, and it is sometimes superfluous; but it is always under control, and duly subordinated to the effect he wishes to produce. If we read him attentively, we shall be as much struck with what he omits as with what he inserts.

Totally destitute of the power to fathom any intricacies of human nature, Defoe is familiar with its external manifestations. He may have no conscious picture of *character;* but he has a keen eye for traits of character, and a very vivid idea of *persons.* He takes a man and his life in the gross, as it were, and sets them down in writing; but as it is his characteristic to be mainly occupied with the life, not the man, so this too becomes the main source of the

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reader's interest. It is not Robinson Crusoe we care about, but the account of his adventures, the solution of the problem of how to live under the circumstances. His name calls up the idea not of a man, but of a story. Say 'Lear,' and you think of a man; you have the image of the white-haired king—the central point, about which the division of his kingdom, the disaffection of his daughters, the terrors of the tempest, the soft pity and sad death of Cordelia, group themselves in subordinate place: say 'Robinson Crusoe,' and you see a desert island, with a man upon it ingeniously adapting his mode of life to his resources; the imagination of a solitary existence, reproduced in a special form with wonderful vividness, consistency, and particularity,—this is the source of our interest. It would be to impugn the verdict of all mankind to say *Robinson Crusoe* was not a great work of genius. It is a work of genius—a most remarkable one—but of a low order of genius. The universal admiration it has obtained may be the admiration of men: but it is founded on the liking of boys. Few educated men or women would care to read it for the first time after the age of five-and-twenty. Even Lamb could say it only "holds its place by tough prescription." The boy revels in it. It furnishes him with food for his imagination in the very direction in which, of all others, it loves to occupy itself. It is not that he cares for Robinson Crusoe,—that dull, ingenious, seafaring creature, with his strange mixture of cowardice and boldness, his unleavened, coarsely sagacious, mechanic nature, his keen trade-instincts, and his rude religious experiences; the boy becomes his own Robinson Crusoe—it is little Tom Smith himself, curled up in a remote corner of the playground, who makes those troublesome voyages on the raft, and rejoices over the goods he saves from the wreck; who contrives his palisade and twisted cables to protect his cave; clothes himself so quaintly in goat-skins; is terrified at the savages; and rejoices in his jurisdiction over the docile Friday, whom he thinks would be better than a dog, and almost as good as a pony. He does not care a farthing about Crusoe as a separate person from himself. This is one reason why he rejects the religious reflections, as a strange and undesirable element in a work otherwise so fascinating. He cannot enter into Crusoe's sense of wickedness, and does not feel the least concern for his soul. If a grown man reads the book in after years, it is to recall the sensations of youth, or curiously to examine the secret of the unbounded popularity it has enjoyed. How much this popularity is due to the happy choice of his subject, we may better estimate when we remember that the popular *Robinson Crusoe* is in reality only a part of the work, and the work itself only one of many others, not less well executed, from the same hand. No other man in the world could

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have drawn so absolutely living a picture of the desert-island life; but the same man has exercised the same power over more complex incidents, and the works are little read. *Moll Flanders* and *Roxana* and part of *Colonel Jack* are not inferior efforts of the same genius that wrote *Robinson Crusoe;* but the subject-matter is perhaps less well adapted for the sort of genius, and they are defaced by much both of narrated incident and expression which unfits them for the delicacy of modern readers. They are pictures of the career of vice. This is unfortunate; for had De Foe occupied himself with the domestic life of his period, and drawn his persons and incidents thence, he would have presented us with a more vivid glimpse into the life of his times than any author has ever done. Miss Austen is not unlike De Foe in some of the main aspects of her genius, though as much his superior in handling character as she is inferior in knowledge and vigour. Had he done as she has done,—had he drawn the Sir Walter Elliots and General Tilneys, the Captain Wentworths and Henry Craufords, the Elizabeths, Anns, and Fannys of his time,—had he introduced us to the country-houses of Anne's or George I.'s time, as she has done to the Mansfield Parks and Longbourns of George III.'s, and brought to bear on them his superior sharpness of detail and wider scope of circumstantiality,—we should have gained a clearer idea of how people really lived in those days than can now be derived from all other sources of information put together. But De Foe as deliberately chooses his materials outside the field of ordinary social life as Miss Austen sedulously restricts herself within it. The latter deals with baronets, dyspeptics, young ladies, and amiable or self-sufficient clergymen. She represents the condition of man as regulated by marriage with settlements; her widest contrasts of life are between Bath and Wiltshire, Plymouth and the Hall; she walks gently through the well-trimmed "shrubberies" of existence, and does not trust herself ever to peep over the park-palings. De Foe goes down the ragged lanes, tramps through gorse and heather, sits by the side of the duckpond, and studies the aspect of the dunghill. Thieves and harlots, convicts, pirates, soldiers, and merchant-adventurers, are his *dramatis personæ*. He has never attempted to draw a respectable man; or if the narrative of the *History of the Plague* be an exception, he is placed amid terrors that dislocate society and strip him of all the conventional proprieties which would naturally belong to him. He gives you no picture of the manners and the life of his times except incidentally, and by showing what strange things were compatible with them, and what sort of life those led who were outcasts from them. There are men who live in the framework of society. These are the respectable men of all classes; they accept the

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state of things into which they were born. To them the arrangements of society are not laws which may be broken, but conditions of the problem of life; they never feel the slightest temptation to infringe them. They are insensible to any hampering control from them: in fact, they are not controlled by them; conforming always to them, they have grown up into them as into a mould, which cannot press them because they fit it. These are the men who become lord mayors and presidents of council, who are respected by their neighbours and preside at quarter-sessions; men who, being bred tailors, aspire to be master-tailors; who, being lawyers, think of a puisne judgeship and never of jurisprudence; who are good church-goers in the country, or if born dissenters, adhere to their own communion; men who are capable of thinking and acting for themselves in all matters in which there is not an already fixed social canon of thought and social rule of action. Such minds give consistence, stability, and endurance to society: they inhabit, they constitute its substance. There are others whose character and destiny it is to dwell, as it were, in the interstices of that substance: they are impatient of the forms of social life; they shake off its artificial restrictions; they dare opinion; they love social adventure; they lead a freer life than the others, but a more dangerous one; escaping from constraint, they lose support; refusing the control of others, they lose a protection against themselves: they form a dangerous habit of disregarding authority and breaking through rules; not conforming to custom, they lose many of the advantages of experience; and, deprived of external guards, are apt to find themselves on some sudden occasion not sufficient to themselves.

De Foe always chooses his heroes and heroines from among this latter class—often from among the lowest specimens of it; and the social conditions of his time offered him greater temptations for so doing than can operate on any writer in our times. The rules of modern society are by far less stringent and oppressive than those of an earlier time; but they extend much wider, and exercise on the whole a much more binding force. It is not that they extend to more classes than they used to do. In the beginning of the eighteenth century the different classes, more widely separated than they now are, had each its peculiar traditions and ideas as to how life ought to be conducted; and the tradesman was bound by as formal and exacting a code of social propriety as the peer. But the very markedness of the distinction between classes left a wider field in the intervals between them for the occupation of those who were not definitely included within them. In the present day class-distinctions are much less abrupt, the borders between various ranks melt insensibly one into another; and social opinion, though not without its distinctions, is

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much more uniform both in its character and in its distribution. It is less of a chain binding the parts, and more of a net enveloping the whole; there is less formality, and more decorum; there is more freedom within the rules, but far more difficulty in escaping from them. It is scarcely possible now to exist as De Foe represents men doing—evading the social restraints, living in the world and yet out of society; dodging social laws, and shifting one's social relations, as may prove convenient for the time. It is the same with legal restraints. Formerly punishments were vastly more severe than they now are; but the chances of avoiding them altogether were far greater, the criminal had a much more varied and extensive field than he now enjoys. If you were taken stealing a watch out of a shop in good Queen Anne's reign, you were pretty sure to be hanged. But then, unless you were taken in the act, there was little or no danger of your being taken at all: whereas now you are sure not be hanged; but, on the other hand, you have not a moment's peace of mind—A 1 may at any moment disturb the harmony of a cheerful supper-party by tapping you on the shoulder, and telling you you are wanted about that little job in Fleet Street. The thief's life was formerly one of more varied enterprise than it now is: it is a profession which has gone down in the world. It no longer offers any temptations to a man of spirit. The main difficulty now lies, not in committing the robbery—this the modern police don't so much care to prevent—but in escaping detection afterwards; which they have made very difficult. Hence a shifting skulking character attaches to the business. A man who makes robbery his occupation finds no opportunity of relaxing in the society of innocent men; he cannot shake off the shop; he is confined withi the atmosphere of his crimes. He cannot put his predatory habits off and on, and persuade himself that he is playing with them. In former times there was a reality corresponding more or less accurately to the high-spirited, adventurous, generous thief of romance; but the gentleman-thief, such as he was, is no more. The difficulty of stopping travellers by the Great Western, and the organised detective industry of Mr. Maine's forces, have narrowed the limits of the art; and its professors are inevitably mean, base, and miserable.

De Foe puts his characters in degraded enough positions, and plunges them deep enough in the meanest criminality; but he was able to show them not absolutely dislocated from the regular order of society; they wind in and out from it, and retain some points of contact. There was then much less of a separate criminal class than now exists. It is still possible to use even the worst members of this class as subjects of fiction, but not if you work in the same way as De Foe does. You

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can't show *all* the life as he does. Dickens paints the Jew, Sykes, Nancy, and the Artful Dodger, but not their actual lives and daily habits. He never shows them as they really are: he only selects the terrible, the ludicrous, or the pathetic incidents and points of character, and shrouds the stained every-day career of wickedness in silence. But De Foe gives all this; to him one event is as important as another, nothing is too commbn-place, nothing too revolting for his pen, he slurs over nothing, all is put down in its naked deformity, and, where it is dull and trivial, in its naked dullness and triviality. Sir Walter Scott was the first to introduce a school of narration in direct contrast to this, and was, perhaps, the greatest master of it we have yet seen. He plays like sunlight over the summits of his subject, develops his story by selected scenes, throws into bright relief the distinguishing characteristics of the numerous *dramatis personæ* with which he crowds his canvas, and from the aspect in which they appear in special circumstances he skilfully gives you an insight into their whole nature. Think of the characters in any one of his best novels. Take *Kenilworth:* Elizabeth, Leicester, Amy Robsart, Varney, Mike Lambourne, Tony Foster, Jean, Giles Gosling, Goldthred, Wayland, Dick Sludge, the Pedagogue Tressilian, Sussex, Raleigh, Blount, with half a score more, all of them perfectly distinct lifelike images, some more laboured, others just indicated by some light passing touch of the master's hand; but all alike clear and cognisable. Observe the language they use. It seems the most characteristic in the world, and it is so; but it is not what such people did really talk, any more than Hamlet really employed blank verse. It is an artificial language of Scott's own, always true in its essence to the requirements of character, and just sufficiently pointed with a flavour of the times in which the story is laid to give it piquancy and vrai-semblance. There is an exquisite dexterity displayed in the employment of traditional and antiquarian knowledge, always used so as to give as true an effect as the author himself could conceive without any of the obscurity and pedantry of raw details. Scott has not the profound insight which a great dramatist requires, but he is essentially a dramatic artist in his mode of working. De Foe is just the reverse; his strokes are all the same thickness, and he labours on with line after line and touch after touch, intent only on exact copy, and careless of the expense either of time or labour. He never drops his subject for an instant to take it up again at a more interesting point; he tracks it like a slot-hound, with his nose close to the ground, through every bend and winding. He makes people talk as they really do talk. Scott makes a conversation of a few sentences convey what in actual life would probably occupy as many pages.

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De Foe gives you every word of it, traces it backwards and forwards through its repetitions, its half-utterances, its corrections, its misconceptions, its chance wanderings, its broken and reunited threads, just as people do really talk who wilfully or unconsciously are not very ready to catch one another's drift. *The Religious Courtship* occupies a pretty large volume. Most men would have found it difficult to spread the arguments over half-a-dozen pages. When a man of De Foe's vivid powers of conception tracks out with this slow perseverance the history of a life, it is impossible that we should not gather a very distinct idea of the person who lived it; it grows up in a quiet and insensible manner out of the events. We are not expressly admitted by the author into the interior nature of such a person, but we know all of him which can be gathered from a complete acquaintance with the minutest circumstances of his actions, and often even of his thoughts. We must use our own insight and judgment if we wish to know what really was the interior character of Moll Flanders, just as we must have done had we met her in life,—not altogether a pleasant sort of person. None of his heroes or heroines are. Roxana is not pleasant; Colonel Jack is decidedly not pleasant; Robinson Crusoe is not the man to make a friend of; perhaps De Foe himself was not.

All these people are modelled on himself, and differ but slightly, except in their circumstances, from one another. Every man's imagination of other men gives you some clue to his own nature. You see the bent of it, at any rate. A man writing fiction is something like one in a dream, drifted hither and thither by the spontaneous working of his instincts and aspirations. He feeds his fancy by giving free play to the various elements in his disposition; and in so doing he reveals more or less, not himself—for he is what his own controlling will and the discipline of circumstance has made him—but his natural constitution, that which may rightly be called his genius, though the word is habitually used with a more contracted signification. This unconscious self-revelation is remarkably full and explicit in De Foe, because, not penetrating into the interior of other men, he was thrown very much on the resources within himself. All his characters are woven out of the same thread; they may differ in many ways, but in certain characteristics, and those the most deep-seated, they are like one another and like the author. It is the innermost part of his nature which a man can least shake off in his writings.

De Foe was a self-occupied man; more, however, by nature than in his life. He was never a self-seeking man; on the contrary, his whole life was a sacrifice of his own interests to those of truth and what he conceived the welfare of his country. Few

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men have left such a memorial of disinterested labour as his *Review*, written exclusively by himself, and published thrice a week, for many years, without profit or advantage; and by its uncompromising rejection of party-interests and single-eyed adherence to his own convictions, bringing odium on his head from Whigs and Tories alike, laying him bare to the attacks of his enemies, exposing him to countless dangers, and actually subjecting him to the grossest injuries,—slanders, law-suits, and imprisonment. Yet this Review itself bears evidence to the nature of the man in his anxious self-vindications, the constant reference to his own personal position, and his often and openly expressed sense of the importance of his labours.

"The author earnestly desired, and to his utmost endeavoured, to be for ever concealed: not that he was ashamed of the work, or sees any reason yet to be so; professing to have a firm belief, that he was not without a more than ordinary presence and assistance of the Divine Spirit in the performance. But being fully satisfied with the prospect of doing good by it, he desired that his 'praise might not be of men, but of God.'

To this end, he took such measures at first for effectually preserving the secret, and for his entirely remaining in the obscurity he desired, that for some time after the publication he continued unguessed at; and he flattered himself for a while that he could be no further inquired after. 'But Satan hindered.'"

The highest escape from the dominion of self may be said to have been closed to De Foe. It is where the intellect and the will are in constant activity under the control of the personal affections. Some men, and more women, can lose themselves in others. It is a great capacity to have; for in its highest direction and fullest development it is what the truest exponents of the Christian faith have in all times recognised as the fulfilment of the religious life. That is the service which is perfect freedom; but as the slavery to self is the most binding and oppressive of servitudes, so any degree of life in others insures, paradoxical as it may seem, its corresponding measure of freedom. This loss of self in others is not to be confounded with what in many outward respects resembles it, though in reality its direct opposite—the concentration of self in others; where one nature, often in the worst indulgence of self-seeking, grafts itself on another, becomes dependent without ceasing to be self-engrossed, and, sacrificing the natural conditions of growth, limits itself to the sustenance and health it can derive from another stock, which often bears it as one of many branches whose fall would not touch its life and scarce impair the fulness of its growth. Both these forms of self-surrender require strong affections of some sort. De Foe's affections were not strong; and he

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was neither in danger of the one, nor could avail himself of the other. It is true, as Mr. Foster has forcibly stated, that De Foe lived alone in the world; true, it is a noble thing to live alone in the isolation of great purposes, too great for the sympathy of a man's compeers; and that man's nature is the highest who feels most keenly the suffering of such an isolation—great as are its supports and consolations. But there is another loneliness, which comes from a want of warmth in the emotions, from an incapacity for strong individual attachments. Such a loneliness may be due to the deficiencies of a man's nature, not to the faults for which he is responsible; but it is an independence whose root is in wretchedness. Now De Foe lived partly, certainly, in the better isolation we speak of; but partly also in the latter. That he was not a man of strong or tender affections, his whole writings bear evidence. He never represents men as permanently bound together by affection. It costs him nothing uniformly to depict attachment as subordinate to interest. He shows husband and wife as united by common interests, common objects, or common duties; but rarely, if ever, by simple love. He has written one of the most moving passages that can be found in the range of English literature. It is the accidental meeting of a mother (a transported convict) with her son, born under tragic circumstances, and whom she had not seen since his earliest years. The father and the son pass by her accidentally in the plantation:

"I had no mask; but I ruffled my hood so about my face that I depended upon it that after above twenty years' absence, and withal not expecting any thing of me in that part of the world, he would not be able to know me.—[This is the father.]—But I need not have used all that caution; for he was grown dim-sighted by some distemper which had fallen upon his eyes, and could but just see well enough to walk about, and not run against a tree or into a ditch. As they drew near to us, I said, 'Does he know you, Mrs. Owen?'—so they called the woman. 'Yes,' she said, 'if he hears me speak, he will know me; but he can't see well enough to know me or any body else.' And so she told me the story of his sight, as I have related. This made me secure; and so I threw open my hood again, and let them pass by me. It was a wretched thing for a mother thus to see her own son, a handsome comely young gentleman in flourishing circumstances, and durst not make herself known to him, and durst not take any notice of him. Let any mother of children that reads this consider it, and but think with what anguish of mind I restrained myself; what yearnings of soul I had in me to embrace him and weep over him; and how I thought all my entrails burned within me; that my very bowels moved, and I knew not what to do; as I now know not how to express those agonies. When he went from me, I stood gazing and trembling, and looking after him as long as I could see him; then, sitting down on

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the grass, just at a place I had marked, I made as if I lay down to rest me; but turned from her, and lying on my face wept, and kissed the ground that he had set his foot on."

This is intense, if not refined, pathos; but it is the description, not of affection, but of the maternal instincts; and his power of entering, as he sometimes does, into this and similar instincts makes his silence on the subject of the more voluntary affections only the more remarkable. Another proof of the want of susceptibility in his own nature in this respect lies in the fact that he was not acutely sensible, as most men would have been, to the isolation of his position. It is true, as Mr. Foster says, that *Robinson Crusoe* could only have been written by a man of solitude and self-sustainment; but the passage he quotes from the preface to *Crusoe's Serious Reflections* in which the author urges the analogy between the life of his hero and his own, marks decisively how little he felt that solitude. He indicates the analogy between the experiences of his own life and the adventures of Crusoe in every particular, excepting just his residence on the desert island:

"The adventures of Robinson Crusoe," he says, "are one whole scene of real life of eight-and-twenty years, spent in the most wandering, desolate, and afflicting circumstances that ever a man went through, and in which I have lived so long a life of wonders in continual storms; fought with the worst kind of savages and man-eaters by unaccountable surprising incidents; fed by miracles greater than that of the ravens; suffered all manner of violences and oppressions, injurious reproaches, contempt of men, attacks of devils, corrections from heaven, and oppositions on earth; have had innumerable ups and downs in matters of fortune; been in worse slavery than Turkish; escaped by as exquisite management as that in the story of Xury and the boat of Salee; been taken up ill at sea in distress; raised again, and depressed again, and that oftener, perhaps, in one man's life, than ever was known before; shipwrecked often, though more by land than by sea;—in a word, there is not a circumstance in the imaginary story but has its just allusion to a real story, and chimes part for part, and step for step, with the inimitable life of Robinson Crusoe."

In his novels we see what might have been the character of De Foe, had not the conscientiousness of his will raised it above the tendencies of his nature. Crusoe may be said to be only deeply self-engrossed; but Moll Flanders, Roxana, Colonel Jack, and Singleton, are selfish to the last extremes of baseness: their whole lives are only one struggle to secure their own interests, regardless not only of the welfare of others, but of gratitude, natural affection, and decency. It may be said that this is only what is to be expected if a man is writing with unsparing exactness and fidelity the lives of thieves and harlots; but this is a

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trait that pervades them all so universally, and shows itself so exactly in the same kind of way, that it evidently has a deeper root than mere appropriateness to the characters of those represented. Moreover De Foe is far from representing his characters as utterly depraved; and he is always anxious to point a moral. It seems strange to our juster notions of things,—and perhaps he wilfully deceived himself a little,—but he seems to have believed that he wrote these elaborate pictures of vice and wickedness with a direct moral purpose. "Throughout the infinite variety of this book," says he in the preface to Moll Flanders, "this fundamental is most strictly adhered to: there is not a wicked action in any part of it, but is first or last rendered unhappy and unfortunate; there is not a superlative villain brought upon the stage, but either he is brought to an unhappy end, or brought to be a penitent; there is not an ill thing mentioned but it is condemned even in the relation, nor a virtuous just thing but it carries its praise along with it. Upon this foundation this book is recommended to the reader as a work from every part of which something may be learned; and some just and religious inference is drawn, by which the reader will have something of instruction, if he pleases to make use of it." Thus (though these professions are not very adequately carried out) we see what the author's intentions were; but though vices and dishonesties meet with a thin share of reprobation, and are followed sooner or later by remorseful repentance, a depravity of selfishness, which to the reader seems far more abhorrent, is passed over in all the silence of complete unconsciousness. And with their selfishness and their insufficient affections, De Foe's characters have that solitary independent course through life which naturally results from these defects, and which reflects back in an exaggerated form the independent solitariness of De Foe's own life. Moll Flanders, Roxana, Singleton, Colonel Jack, all stand quite alone in the world. They are all single separate molecules, shifting to and fro in the wide sands of life—touching others, but never for a moment incorporated with them; they all live as using the world for themselves, and standing off from its binding influences; they grasp at others for a momentary assistance, but they never allow another's claim to interfere with their own liberty; they seize with the affections, but are never bound by them; they may cling to another life, but it is with a reserved power of disengagement, as a limpet clings to a rock; they never strike root in it, and grow from it, like a plant.

To turn to another point, in which the works give a glimpse into the interior of the writer. De Foe was very unfortunate as a trader; the same strong imagination acting on practical sub-

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jects as is displayed in his novels, made him a reformer in society and also a speculator in business. He would seem to have been the very man to succeed in the latter function; and his failure was probably due, as indeed he himself hints, to a distracting and overbalanced interest in the former direction, and to the literary habits it engendered. Whatever was the cause of his misfortunes, he showed himself in all his reverses a man of unblemished honesty and integrity. More, he showed himself often and under strong temptations a disinterested man. Yet in his heart he must have had an intense love of property; in his novels he lets his passion for it run free. He gloats over money or bales of silk, over spices and pearls; no sums are too large for him, no items too minute; he delights in putting the values down in separate lines, and totting up the columns. He revels in doubloons and pistoles and "pieces of eight." Little inventories have an especial charm for him; he always tells you exactly what his thieves' winnings amount to, and cannot for the life of him help looking at stealing as a sort of business, and secretly rejoicing when the profits come in. When he describes three young pickpockets going out, he has a certain reluctant sympathy with the "dexterous young rogues;" and tells us: "The list of their purchase the first night was as follows:"

"1. A white handkerchief from a country wench, as she was staring up at a jack-pudding; there was 3*s.* 6*d.* and a row of pins tied up in one end of it.

2. A coloured handkerchief, out of a young country fellow's pocket, as he was buying a china orange.

3. A riband purse with 11*s.* 3*d.* and a silver thimble in it, out of a young woman's pocket, just as a fellow offered to pick her up.

N.B. She missed her purse presently; but, not seeing the thief, charged the man with it that would have picked her up, and cried out, 'A pickpocket!' And he fell into the hands of the mob; but, being known in the street, he got off with great difficulty.

4. A knife and fork, that a couple of boys had just bought, and were going home with; the young rogue that took it got it within the minute after the boy had put it in his pocket.

5. A little silver box with 7*s.* in it, all in small silver,—1*d.*, 2*d.*, 3*d.*, 4*d.* pieces.

N.B. This it seems a maid pulled out of her pocket, to pay at her going into the booth to see a show; and the little rogue got his hand in and fetched it off, just as she put it up again.

6. Another silk handkerchief, out of a gentleman's pocket.

7. Another.

8. A jointed baby, and a little looking-glass, stolen off a toyseller's stall in the fair."

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The account of how the little Colonel Jack and his friend the small Major dined on the proceeds of this enterprise is not to the purpose; but is so happy an illustration of De Foe's wonderful power of realising the minutest traits in a person he has once conceived, that we cannot forbear quoting it:

"When we had thus fitted ourselves, I said, 'Hark ye, Major Jack, you and I never had any money in our lives before, and we never had a good dinner in all our lives: what if we should go somewhere and get some victuals? I am very hungry.'

'So we will, then,' says the Major, 'I am hungry too. So we went to a boiling-cook's in Rosemary Lane, where we treated ourselves nobly; and, as I thought with myself, we began to live like gentlemen, for we had three-pennyworth of boiled beef, two-pennyworth of pudding, a penny brick (as they call it, or loaf), and a whole pint of strong beer; which was seven-pence in all.

N.B. We had each of us a good mess of charming beef-broth into the bargain; and, which cheered my heart wonderfully, all the while we were at dinner, the maid and the boy in the house, every time they passed by the open box where we sat at our dinner, would look in and cry, 'Gentlemen, do you call?' and, 'Do ye call, gentlemen?' I say this was as good to me as all my dinner."

In his more fortunate days, after he has reached man's estate, Colonel Jack makes his fortune in Virginia; and De Foe finds full indulgence for his fancy in making him trade with immense profits to Cuba and the coast of Mexico. There too, as in many other cases, he makes opportunities for the giving of presents, and rejoices in laying them out on the table and telling you how much every thing cost:

"This bale was, in general, made up of several smaller bales, which I had directed, so that I might have room to make presents, equally sorted as the circumstance might direct me. However, they were all considerable, and I reckoned the whole bale cost me near 200*l.* sterling in England; and, though my present circumstances required some limits to my bounty in making presents, yet the obligation I was under being so much the greater, especially to this one friendly generous Spaniard, I thought I could not do better than, by opening two of the smaller bales, join them together, and make my gift something suitable to the benefactor, and to the respect he had shown me; accordingly I took two bales, and, laying the goods together, the contents were as follows:

Two pieces of fine English broadcloth, the finest that could be got in London, divided, as was that which I gave to the governor, at the Havannah, into fine crimson in grain, fine light mixtures, and fine black.

Four pieces of fine Holland, of 7*s.* to 8*s.* per ell in London.

Twelve pieces of fine silk drugget and duroys, for men's wear.

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Six pieces of broad silks, two damasks, two brocaded silks, and two mantuas.

With a box of ribands, and a box of lace; the last cost about 40*l.* sterling in England.

This handsome parcel I laid open in my apartment; and brought him up-stairs one morning, on pretence to drink chocolate with me, which he ordinarily did; when, as we drank chocolate, and were merry, I said to him,—though I had sold him almost all my cargo, and taken his money, yet the truth was, that I ought not to have sold them to him, but to have laid them all at his feet, for that it was to his direction I owed the having any thing saved at all.

He smiled, and, with a great deal of friendship in his face, told me, that not to have paid me for them would have been to have plundered a shipwreck, which had been worse than to have robbed an hospital.

At last I told him I had two requests to make to him, which must not be denied. I told him I had a small present to make him, which I would give him a reason why he should not refuse to accept; and the second request I would make after the first was granted. He said he would have accepted my present from me, if I had not been under a disaster; but, as it was, it would be cruel and ungenerous. But, I told him, he was obliged to hear my reason for his accepting it. Then I told him that this parcel was made up for him by name, by my wife and I in Virginia, and his name set on the marks of the bale; and accordingly I showed him the marks, which was indeed on one of the bales, but I had doubled it now, as above, so that I told him these were his own proper goods; and, in short, I pressed him so to receive them, that he made a bow; and I said no more, but ordered my negro, —that is to say, his negro that waited on me,—to carry them all, except the two boxes, into his apartments, but would not let him see the particulars till they were all carried away.

After he was gone, about a quarter of an hour, he came in raving, and almost swearing, and in a great passion, but I could easily see he was exceedingly pleased; and told me, had he known the particulars, he would never have suffered them to have gone as he did; and at last used the very same compliment that the governor at the Havannah used, viz. that it was a present fit for a viceroy of Mexico rather than for him."

In the substance of their constitution, still more than in special traits, do De Foe's fictitious personages echo back their creator. They have all a certain squareness and solidity; they are all of hardy and stubborn materials. They put you in mind of timber; they have no sensibility, no pliancy. The events of life make just such an impression as blows on a heavy balk of wood; they bear the brunt and carry the dent it leaves, but the blow has no perceptible effect on them. The roughest treatment does but blunt their edges and tear off a few splinters. Theirs is never the elasticity which recovers from a blow, but the tough fibrous nature which a blow cannot permanently injure. Robin-

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son Crusoe is the only one of De Foe's heroes who is at all sensible to the injuries of fortune; and even he is only a little stunned by the worst that befalls him, and less by actual evils than the imagination of them—as when he sees the footprint on the sand. De Foe himself passed through a life crowded with troubles, but a small part of which would have shattered, or even killed, many men; but they neither broke nor bowed him. Yet he had neither the levity which offers no resistance, nor the spring which casts off all the effect; he knew all he had gone through; he remembered the details of his sufferings; he felt, and even deeply, but dully. He was pachydermatous, tough, and tenacious of life. Sensitiveness is generally a part of imaginative genius; the same organisation which renders a man sensible to the finer and more elusive influences which surround him, exposes a trembling sensibility to the touch of pain or annoyance, so that sometimes he becomes like him who was

> "As a nerve, o'er which do creep
> The else unfelt oppressions of the world."

But De Foe's genius had nothing of this character; and as his nature qualified him to deal only with the grosser and more obvious facts of existence, so, on the other hand, it required a hard blow to hurt him. "Thirteen times," says he, "I have been rich and poor;" but he bore the vicissitudes of fortune with a cheerful sedateness which never failed him. He worked and lived, not like a winged Pegasus trampling the air, but like a serious laborious ox, dragging the slow plough through the long furrows, and rolling round a patient reproachful eye in answer to injury. There was nobleness too as well as constitutional phlegm in this patience of De Foe's; for it was certainly based, not only on his imperturbability of disposition, but in great measure on a trustful acceptance of God's will, and a just reliance on the goodness of the cause he advocated. His courage was of the same class. It was great, and did not fail him in arduous trials. Fear never could put him out of the course he felt called upon to follow. Still he recognised discretion as the better part of valour; he had no love of danger; and if it could be avoided without undue compromise, he was always willing to accept the terms. He had little or nothing of what we call spirit; no sensitiveness on the point of personal honour; injustice did not raise a fire in him, but a steady and resolute temper of resistance; injuries could never excite in him a desire for revenge; he replied to them by calm expostulation, or that sort of satire whose sting lies in its truthfulness,—a very thorough laying bare to day of his adversaries' weak points. Swift, with his fierce gladiatorial spirit, struck him insultingly a backhanded blow; to which De Foe re-

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plied in a tone that rises something above his usual heavy strain, and which shows the fair, temperate, political tradesman in a far better light than the arrogant, conscienceless, political churchman. Among his contemporaries, the constancy with which he endured persecution, and the steady disregard of threats and indignities with which he persisted in his purposes, won him the reputation of "a man of true courage." For himself he lays claim only to a good cause:

"Fame, a lying jade, would talk me up for I know not what of courage; and they call me a fighting fellow. I despise the flattery; I profess to know nothing of it, further than truth makes any man bold; and I acknowledge, that give me but a bad cause, and I am the greatest coward in the world. Truth inspires nature; and as in defence of truth no honest man can be a coward, so no man of sense can be bold when he is in the wrong. He that is honest must be brave; and it is my opinion that a coward cannot be an honest man. In defence of truth, I think (pardon me that I dare go no further, for who knows himself?)—I say I think I could dare to die; but a child may beat me if I am in the wrong. Guilt gives trembling to the hands, blushing to the face, and fills the heart with amazement and terror. I question whether there is much, if any, difference between bravery and cowardice, but what is founded in the principle they are engaged for; and I no more believe any man is born a coward than that he is born a knave. Truth makes a man of courage, and guilt makes that man a coward."

This courage of the conscience, totally unaccompanied by any love of danger, or of combat for its own sake, might be illustrated from many pages of De Foe's novels. It is in his life, however, that we must look to see his sturdy and obstinate yet temperate nonconformist spirit, and that direct uncalculating energy, that unquestioning conviction, that intense reliance on the effect of one's own individual exertion, that power of standing alone and acting unsupported, which have given, not to the government or the higher gentry, but to the body of the English nation, its distinctive and peculiar type of character; and which De Foe possessed in a degree so remarkable, as to make him stand out perhaps of all Englishmen the most English our history can show.

In all his writings we trace an intellect corresponding to the nature we have endeavoured to describe. Like that, it was somewhat coarse in grain and confined in scope, but vigorous and powerful. A sort of Benjamin's portion of retail tradesman's mind, preserving the vulgar proportions and moving under the common conditions, but on a higher level of power,—a vessel of larger capacity and nobler uses, yet made of the same clay as the meanest. He has shrewd instincts, but cumbrous thoughts; he

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can express himself as fully, and even as fast, as you please; but not concisely. His ideas are heavy malleable metal, and he loves to hammer them out; his mind moves easily, but without spring, and he is a heavy hand at a joke. No one likes to call him dull, and there is a vigour in all he writes which redeems him from the charge; but tedious and intolerably self-repeating he undeniably is. This is a defect, however, which shows less in his novels than elsewhere. He is a master in the art of narration, and for the mere telling of a story, does it better and more simply than any writer we have. His style in his novels is well adapted to the level of his subject. In itself it scarcely deserves the commendation it has received. It is like the manners of a farmer at an Inn: a man of the best breeding could not be more at his ease; but it is because he submits to no artificial restraint whatever. In his works, written expressly for amusement or instruction, the plainness of his writing suits well with his plain rude way of treating his subject, and his complete insensibility to, and disregard of, any of its refinements or less obvious aspects. His shortcomings in this respect have been one great cause of the popularity these works have obtained, especially among the less-highly cultivated classes. Every reader feels competent to say as he reads, "This is true and lifelike,"—to follow his arguments, and to comprehend his reflections. It is this which made Lamb say he was "good kitchen reading." Fielding is any thing but kitchen reading. A man must take pains with his education, and have a cultivated mind, if he intends to read *Tom Jones* so as to appreciate it. It has been called vulgar; it may contain vulgarities, but it is the least level to common capacities of any novel in the language; and De Foe's novels are perhaps the most so. The wonderful thing is, the wealth of the mine he lays bare at this low level, and on these universal conditions. There must be something very singular in a work which the chimney-sweep and the peer both understand and both find interesting,—which the latter at any rate admires, and the former fully enjoys. This would be an easy triumph if it were gained by an appeal to, or a description of, the common feelings; but the characteristic of De Foe is, that he has written books universally popular, whose interest is quite independent of this universal resource. His memory was a remarkable one, and he was widely and accurately informed in all those matters which a man learns by observation; and he had a signal power of gathering up that sort of information which is knowledge at first-hand, without requiring to be digested, and which is got through eye and ear rather than through books. His education had been good, but he appears simply to have mastered languages for practical use; to have accumulated the facts, not to have studied the ideas, conveyed in

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them. Though a wide reader, he was never interested in other men's thoughts,—if he cites them, it is simply as authorities. When he himself thinks, it is (with rare exceptions) to direct practical issues; then he is sagacious, acute—even wise in broad every-day matters. Only in one direction did he indulge in any speculative thought, and only in this one direction did his imagination break through its ordinary matter-of-fact boundaries. He had a singular interest in the world of spirits. He wrote a *History of the Devil;* and it is hard to say what object he proposed to himself in this amazingly tiresome, confused, lumbering work; a strange sort of half-serious, half-burlesque attempt to track the course of the great enemy's operations, criticising "Mr. Milton's" account of his fall, counting up how many names he has in Scripture, and apologising for still calling him "plain devil;" pursuing him through Jewish history, and partly through profane; inquiring—"What may probably be the great business this black emperor has at present upon his hands, either in this world or out of it, and by what agents he works;" and finally, discussing "his last scene of liberty," and "what may be supposed to be his end." His *Life of Duncan Campbell* is another extraordinary production of the same class. It professes to be the history of a famous deaf and dumb wise man, who in those days had set up as a fortune-teller in London; and seriously accounts for his powers of penetrating futurity as derived from the second-sight and intercourse with the spiritual world. What grains of truth there may be in the book as a biography, and how far it is jest or grave hoaxing, and how far serious; how much of it the author himself believed,—it is impossible to tell. One can never say of De Foe, whether he was so fond of fiction he could never write unmixed truth, or so fond of exact truth as to spoil his hoaxes by making them too real. There is no joke in making people believe any thing short of what, at bottom, is a clear and palpable absurdity; and we are far from sharing in the modern astonishment, either that the public should at first have thought the famous tract on *The Shortest Way with the Dissenters* was written in earnest, or that both dissenters and Tories should have felt incensed against the author when it was found to be ironical. Much of it is common Tory argument and assertion, seriously and forcibly put; and the exaggeration of the conclusion scarcely, if at all, overstepped the limits of what might have proceeded from the pen of a high-flying Tory enthusiast. The whole thing had no point except as coming from a dissenter, and bore no evidence of doing so in the title-page or elsewhere. To have it written at all must have rubbed the sores of the dissenters; and to find it was written in travestie exasperated their oppressors. The *History of the Apparition of*

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Mrs. Veal is a very circumstantial ghost-story, and now we think it a very good joke; but it was not meant as a joke, any more than the cures of bad legs we see in the advertisements of quack ointments are meant as jokes. Very likely De Foe, in his own breast, enjoyed a grave sort of chuckle at the humour of making the apparition of "a maiden gentlewoman of about thirty years of age, who for some years past had been troubled with fits," appear to Mrs. Bargrave, and recommend the perusal of Drelincourt's *Book of Consolations against the Fear of Death;* but he never meant the public to share his amusement. It is one of the most remarkable exhibitions ever seen of a power of giving an exact air of reality to imagined facts. Its old formal precise air, our knowledge that it was got up to sell the book to which it was prefixed, and of the extraordinary success it had, amuse us who are in the secret. But De Foe did not mean it to amuse; he meant it to convince; he deliberately intended it as an imposition, and a most successful one it proved. There are plenty more such ghost-stories scattered through De Foe's works. Take the following, with its terrific vocal conclusion, as a specimen:

"In the year 1711, one Mrs. Stephens and her daughter were, together with Mr. Campbell, at the house of Mr. Ramells, a very great and noted weaver at Haggerstone; where the rainy weather detained them till late at night. Just after the clock struck twelve, they all of them went to the door to see if the rain had ceased, being extremely desirous to get home. As soon as ever they had opened the door and were all got together, there appeared before them a thing all in white; the face seemed of a dismal pallid hue, but the eyes thereof fiery and flaming, like beacons, and of a saucer size. It made its approaches to them, till it came up within the space of about three yards of them; there it fixed and stood like a figure agaze for some minutes; and they all stood likewise stiff, like the figure, frozen with fear, motionless, and speechless. When all of a sudden it vanished from their eyes; and that apparition to the sight was succeeded by a noise, or the appearance of a noise, like that which is occasioned by the fighting of twenty mastiff dogs."

All we can say as to De Foe's way of regarding these and similar supernatural, or quasi-supernatural occurrences, as we choose to think them, is, that it is clear he was not prepared entirely to disbelieve; but these sort of stories, accompanied by direct strenuous assertions as to their truth in fact, and grave argument as to their bearing on unbelief, are chiefly remarkable for our present purpose as a further indication of the strange sort of confusion there seems to have been in De Foe's mind between real fact and possible fact. His imagination is so strong, that its facts seem to him of equal weight with those of memory

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or knowledge; and he appears scarcely to recognise the boundary between truth and fiction. His characters, as usual, carry the tendency a step further. They lie, to suit their purposes, at every turn, and without scruple or remorse.

De Foe was a man of strong religious convictions, and there is scarcely one of his writings which does not bear the impress of his deep sense of the all-outweighing importance of a religious life; and he can even venture to affirm, in one of his vindicatory articles in his Review, that *Ad Te, quacunque vocas*, has been the rule of his own life. He had a strong sense of direct inspiration, even as guiding to or deterring from particular actions. Neither his genius nor his heart, however, were such as to give him any profound insight into a sense of spiritual relations. He had that sort of temperament which can feel and sympathise with sudden and violent accesses of somewhat coarse religious emotion, with too much sense and staidness on the one hand, and too much conscientiousness on the other, to make him guilty either of the unseemly excesses, or the discordant self-indulgence, which distinguish the debased forms of so-called Evangelicism. All his characters repent in the same way; they are suddenly stricken with an overwhelming sense, not so much of their guilt as of their crimes; they are appalled to think themselves outcasts from God; they lay down their evil habits generally when circumstances have removed the temptation to pursue them; repent in a summary manner, and become without difficulty sincere penitents and religious characters. He has no sense of the temptations, the trials, the difficulties with which the souls of most men find themselves surrounded after they have once left home with Bunyan's pilgrim. He knows that strait is the gate, and sharp the struggle necessary to pass it; but he always seems to forget that narrow is the way even after the gate is passed.

We have strict conventional rules in England as to what are to be considered readable books for society at large. It is scarcely necessary to say, that De Foe's novels are quite outside this pale. It is not that they were written with the least idea either of pandering to a vicious nature, or shocking an innocent one; but they deal frankly with matters about which our better modern taste is silent, and use language which shocks modern refinement.

It is only fair, however, to say, they are in their essence wholesome, decent, and, above all, cleanly. They have neither the varnished prurience of Richardson, the disgusting filth of Swift, nor the somewhat too indulgent and sympathising warmth of Fielding; they are plain-spoken and gross, but that is the worst of them; and though the obvious and hammered moralities of the author seem valueless enough, it is to be remembered

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that the class whose rudeness would make it impervious to injury from the absence of delicacy in these works, is just the one in a position to profit by their rough and primitive teaching. For those who seek it, they contain a deeper moral, not the less important because the writer was unconscious of its existence. They are warnings against the too common error of confounding crime and sin. They are the histories of criminals, who remind us at every page that they are human beings just like ourselves; that the forms of sin are often the result merely of circumstances; and that the aberration of the will, not the injury done to society, is the measure of a man's sinfulness. They show us among thieves and harlots the very same struggles against new temptations, the same slow declension and self-enfeebling wiles, which we have to experience and contend against in ourselves. We are too apt to think of the criminal outcasts of society as of persons removed from the ordinary conditions of humanity, and given up to a reprobate condition totally different from our own. One day we shall probably be surprised to find that, while right and wrong continue to differ infinitely, the various degrees of human sinfulness lie within much narrower limits than we, who measure by the external act, are at all accustomed to conceive. De Foe is a great teacher of charity; he always paints the remaining good with the growing evil, and never dares to show the most degraded and abandoned of his wretches as beyond the pale of repentance, or unattended by the merciful providences of God; nay, he can never bear to quit them at last, except in tears and penitence and in the entrance-gate at least of reconciliation.

Art. VI.—ITALY.

Correspondence with Sardinia respecting the State of Affairs in Italy; presented to both Houses of Parliament by command of Her Majesty. 1856.

History of Piedmont. By Antonio Gallenga. London, Chapman and Hall.

The Subalpine Kingdom. By Bayle St. John. Same Publishers.

A FULLY developed conscience is an awful and perilous blessing; and if the time of its highest sensitiveness arrives prematurely, the ultimate form of the character is likely to be prejudiced rather than benefited. It is better that some rough work should be got through in boyhood, before scruples are weighed and constant moral thoughtfulness exercised. Instinct has its place; and

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it is to be regretted when a man has lost the opportunity of gaining that rude and imperious self-reliance, that sense of force, that power of flinging himself recklessly upon his object, which can hardly be acquired with a safe conscience when the judgment has begun to occupy itself with the problems of duty. In this respect nations are not unlike men. Europe is vastly indebted to those violent mediæval periods when it was thought no sin to conquer, and when the predominances which appeared carried their own justification with them, and showed themselves to be natural and legitimate by effecting the fusion of many disconnected atoms into organic wholes. International police did not exist. Political society was disintegrated. The benefits of national union could only be secured in the first instance by force; and when once the coagulation into large masses had begun, small independences were swallowed up with increasing rapidity. There was no previous history to forget, no ancient constitution to lose. Race, language, geographical position, had their due respective shares in determining the divisions of mankind; and compressive power and natural elective affinities settled their disputes so far satisfactorily, as to render modern Europe first a possibility, and then a fact.

But the simple agencies which, after all, are most effectual in nation-making belong only to a rude and unconscious society. A nation once fully formed and organised becomes conscious of a new and precious possession,—its own nationality; and unorganised or half-organised nations acquire the rooted persuasion that certain indefeasible rights of man are withheld from them. A further fusion thus becomes in all cases more difficult, and in many impracticable. The nation whose attitude is aggressive, and the nation whose attitude is defensive, have both of them characteristics which neither will consent to sacrifice; for they not only have them, but know that they have them, and that such distinctions are always considered as marking different families of men. The national language has become something more than the only medium of communication known to the people. It has acquired a sacredness of its own. Thoughts have been expressed in it which lose their full flavour if they are rendered into other words. The greatest minds of the race have left their impress on it. The genius of the people is expressed in its images, its idioms, its very syntax. Laws have grown up like language. The habitudes of domestic life, the mode of enjoying property, the gradations of rank, which are usual, have acquired the force of law. It cannot be told who the lawgiver was, nor how the common agreement of the nation was attained. It is an ultimate fact, part of the definition of the nation, that the men who compose it enjoy property in particular modes, rever-

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ence particular badges of superiority, marry and are given in marriage according to certain regulations and conditions. They will not consent to speak of these things, to discuss matters affecting their social well-being, in a strange tongue, or in company with strangers. Their institutions are not arbitrary inventions, to be supported by argument, or to be modified by the logic of a cosmopolitan expediency. They are part of their nationality; and, as such, entwined with their affections. Names and phrases which belong to them are heard with a thrill which supersedes and transcends all argument; and he who is not born to their freemasonries shall not be heard to speak of them as a critic. Their history is first acted, and afterwards written. Memory recurs to deeds of ancestral valour, words of ancestral wisdom, instances of ancestral power or influence. All gathers round the national idea; till the nation is sensible of an individual soul, volition, and power, even as a single being is. The more gross and selfish elements of the conception are soon clothed and hidden by nobler ones. New duties grow up. The national ark is something not only to be defended for what it contains convenient and useful to the nation; it is to be raised aloft, and reverenced at home and abroad as a holy shrine sanctified by the protection of the gods. The national existence is to be exalted, beautified, perfected in every way. The deep-rooted instinct of seeking to make all work taken in hand as good as possible, receives its noblest and most fruitful development in the glorification of the national life. Finally, the self-perfecting tendency blossoms out into the belief in a mission. The nation is now sacred indeed. Has not God set her on a hill, and filled her stores with corn and wine and oil, her ports with ships, and her houses with plenty? Is not His temple in the midst of her? Has He not set her apart, and distinguished her from all other nations? Have not her sons prophesied, and filled the whole earth with their singing, and beautified the place of their birth, so that the stranger comes many leagues to gaze at it? Is this all for naught? Has she not been set on this pinnacle for a purpose? Is there not a career before her, in which religion itself seems to sanction a less degree of humility than is required of the individual man, which has, in fact, something godlike about it, and which, being godlike, must, while preserving the national supremacy, transcend mere selfish ends? She is to teach the nations how to live. She is marching onward, with a history behind her and a destiny before her; and woe to him who shall seek to check her course!

It was the misfortune of Italy that its political conscience, or rather the political consciences of its component parts, came prematurely. That special and inestimable benefit of the age of

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force—the possibility of consolidating the scattered elements of a nation and establishing a central authority, without disturbing old institutions or perpetuating the distinction between conquering and conquered populations—was never enjoyed by that unhappy country,—unhappy even in the wealth of her life, her genius, and her traditions. She was not subjected to the beneficent agency of the barbarous military chief, who welds the populations of large rural tracts, stable in their inertness, into states where warlike strength and the stubborn persistency of vassal fidelity are the main objects of his own desire, and sufficient for his rude retainers. Her towns did not nourish a feeble existence behind the sevenhided shield of a strong feudality, till town and baron became collateral and friendly elements in a mixed commonwealth. Brilliant, turbulent, precocious, the national life was dissipated in a multitude of municipal republics, full-grown before their time, rapidly making separate histories each for itself, impatient of subjection, and in no way fitted for an age which was but preparing the way for a new civilisation. Other countries were raising dams against the encroaching ocean, and making the land on which their cities were to grow. Italy was building the cities without making the dams, and was pampering political self-consciousness in a thousand directions without providing the bulwarks of political strength.

Some traces, no doubt, there were of a wish to resist the purely disintegrating influences of the time. Unhappily such unity as was thought of was not a natural national unity consistent with freedom, but was a mere *souvenir* of the classical age, and had a fatal cosmopolitan taint. The Ghibelline who thought he saw a Roman empire beyond the Alps, the Guelph who connected his hopes and political faith with the cosmopolitan church of Rome, alike opened a path for the march of foreign armies, and helped to keep Italy from taking her place among the nations. It is fatal to mistake memories for hopes. The Roman empire was not to rise again as a temporal power. The majority of the small and isolated republics of Italy were soon to resign their brilliant and feverish independence, and the country was to be cut up into a multitude of divisions, perpetually dissentient, and perpetually the tools of foreign ambition. Glorious were some of their histories; but if Venice and Genoa, with their small appurtenances, could rank with the leading states of the world; if the house of Savoy, by the situation of its lands and the personal qualities of its chiefs, could so often play a great part in Europe,—what might not that country be which not only held Venice, Genoa, and Piedmont, but held also Lombardy, Florence, and Rome herself, with many other cities of ancient and modern fame, and which, as well as being the fairest terri-

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tory on which the sun shines, had one of the most commanding geographical positions in the world?

The ideal Italy is a conception which has grown from age to age in the minds of her more enlightened sons. It is purely ideal. The Italy alike of the impassioned Mazzini and the politic Cavour has never yet been organised or recognised. She is an abstraction from the history of ages. The Roman republic is gone, and the Roman empire is gone after it; the Papacy is tottering; the republics of Venice, Genoa, Florence, are gone; Dante sleeps by the sand of the Adriatic, and Michael Angelo at home in Florence. But all these men and things, and more,—a crowd of great teachers, great warriors, and great saints,—all were Italian: yet Italy, to whom has been committed so much of the fire from heaven, still lives, still struggles heroically against barbarian force, and has never been allowed to stand alone and united, and has never had those rights and that position which the Frenchman, the Spaniard, and the Englishman (all of whom she has taught and inspired), regard as their birthright. This, she says, ought no longer to be. Is this longing for nationality a pampered brainsick fancy? or is it a healthy aspiration, with which we ought all to sympathise and in which we ought all to have faith?

There is a poetical sphere in politics. Let this be admitted with thankfulness and remembered, for it is too often forgotten. Every feeling of nationality is a great power. National aspirations move before vast bodies of men,—a pillar of cloud in the daytime and a pillar of fire by night. A continuous national history has a real binding force, and guarantees a still prolonged stability. The trophies of the past are but the prophecies of the future. Was not Waterloo to be expected from the England of Agincourt? and shall the England of Agincourt and Waterloo vail her pretensions because her servants have somewhat mismanaged matters in the Crimea? To destroy or smother a nationality is to root up a plant from God's garden, to diminish the variety and splendour of the world. It is true, that the world has not room for too many nationalities. It is necessary to the stability of the whole system that the independent parts should not be too numerous or too weak. It is sometimes even necessary to sacrifice small powers, or great nations with weak national instincts, to the glory and aggrandisement of some more potent political or national energy. But, as we have said, the time for this rough work, this founding of right upon might, was, so far as Europe is concerned, in the middle ages. We have now reached another period, when conquest does not involve assimilation; and conquest without assimilation is sheer destruction and ravage, unless the conquering

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people owes its supremacy to its moral and intellectual, more than to its material supremacy. Our English antipathy to a power like Austria is not, then, a sickly sentimentalism, but a healthy virtue, which we are bound to feed and cherish. It is of the very essence of virtue; for it is conservative of life and vigour,—the salt of political existence, the antagonist to death and putrefaction. An Austrian diplomatist has boasted that his government was preeminently *imperial*;—in other words, an empire of force and fraud alone, founded on no natural affinities, perpetually employed in repressing national life in several subject populations, and producing no resultant national life as the consequence of their artificial union.

This antagonism of the national to the imperial spirit is the distinguishing character of those histories which most surely enlist the sympathies of a free people. We exult in the downfall of Xerxes, and mourn the successes of Philip. Whatever materialising statesmen may say, it is the extinction of a nationality, felt to be worthy to live, which excites, and which ought to excite, our feelings far more than the oppressive misgovernment which is but one of its incidents;—just as the sense of the pain and forlornness of a violent and untended death is lost sight of in the fact of murder. A little consideration, however, ought to convince those who think least of ideal wrongs, that the sufferings which they recognise and are willing to ameliorate flow directly from the conquest in which they see little or no harm. The harsh rule is generally the less crime, and often the mere unavoidable consequence. To be ruled at all is galling to the natural man. His pride requires some natural birthright of superiority to be shown him before he will succumb, and asks to be participant in the glory of his chiefs. Be the reasons ideal or material, all the world knows that a government of the imperial sort is great at the expense of its subjects, and that the fame of its functionaries carries no thrill of exultation to the hearts of the latter. There is no identification of interests between the governors and the governed, and the one will not attribute any representative character to the other. A strong feeling of inborn loyalty is necessary to reconcile men to the inevitable frictions of government; and where this is not only absent, but has its place filled by a sentiment of indignation for trampled right and a cherished allegiance to the unrealised ideal of nationality, it is not wonderful that mutual distrust, the most fruitful parent of all kinds of misrule and anarchy, should take deep root. This distrust soon shows the practical importance of that idealism which politic persons scorn. The history of the recent miseries of Europe is but the history of the distrusts of monarchs and their subjects, of assemblies and their presidents, of peoples and their leaders.

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By distrusting his people, Louis Philippe lost the opportunity of gaining their trust, and so fell; and with him many fair hopes. By mutual distrust between Louis Napoleon and his assembly, their harmonious action became impossible; and by the popular distrust of the assembly, the republic ceased to be able to insure order, and Frenchmen acquiesced in the commands of one who at least trusted himself. Mutual distrust has prevented the long prescription of Austrian power in Italy from attaining any legitimacy except in protocols. Distrust determined the Hapsburgs to conquer their kingdom of Hungary; and the distrusts of Magyar and Croat, of aristocrats and democrats, of soldiers and civilians, enabled them to effect their purpose. Distrust made the mildly-governed Tuscans too easily upset their government, and the government too easily suffer itself to be upset; and a meaner distrust made the Grand Duke, when voluntarily recalled, re-enter his dominions with Austrian forces at his back. Most markedly of all, distrust of a flock by their pastor, distrust of almost all his most reliable subjects by their sovereign, distrust by the masses of a righteous and trustworthy and Italian minister, if a stern one—that distrust which points the dagger—soon rendered chimerical such hopes as there were of a free government by lay hands in Rome. Few absolute governments can, in an educated age, escape this Nemesis; but no anti-national one, whether it be the direct rule of foreign arms, or, what is in many respects worse, the reliance of a professedly independent government on foreign succour in cases of domestic commotion. Nationality, the united strength of a great race, wielded by an indigenous government, which the nation can feel to be their natural organ, is the one great condition of political confidence. Its presence insures the permanence of most of the states of Europe. If it were not for this, France would be no better off than Spain, or Spain than Italy; but having this, we feel that the problems of each will solve themselves some time or other out of the existing elements. It is only when we turn to Italy, which has it not, that all our hopes tend to some absolute change, some regeneration which shall evoke into activity principles both conservative and progressive which have been hitherto in abeyance.

On such grounds as these, then, nationality is no fancy. It is true it is very difficult to talk about it in diplomatic forms, because the questions relating to it concern facts,—matters in which the fact makes the right,—and not names and conventions. It is less easy to state than to feel the difference between a merged and a subjugated national existence, especially in cases, like that of Ireland, where it must be admitted that in the beginning there was a long period of mere subjugation, which left

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its traces even at a recent time. It is only by endeavouring to arrive at a nice appreciation of historical facts that we can avoid Mr. Carlyle's deification of force on the one hand, and the Young-Ireland refusal to allow any prescriptive bar to national rights on the other. There will often be grievous errors in the estimate; but no person who takes interest in public affairs can at the present time shrink from attempting it.

Italy is remarkable as presenting a collection of bad polities, which are also anti-national; while the people are inspired by an intense feeling of nationality, which seems the more real, inasmuch as it has gone on perpetually strengthening, without having ever as yet attained its object. In this very fact we see its best hope. It appears to be not a scholarly recollection, but a modern living growth. The world, all self-conservative as it is, nevertheless does not *repeat* itself. A resuscitation, a rejuvenescence, is always suspicious. Age is a great power while the links of continuity are unbroken; but once snap the chain, and it is weary work to live on draughts from the well of the past. It is a misrepresentation to represent Italy as being in this case. Politically, she has yet to live; and the anxiety which has long filled all minds respecting her, and the sense that she cannot for ever continue in her present position, are good evidence that a power is astir in her members which will vindicate her right to live. How is she at present constituted?

Italy (with the exception of the Piedmontese kingdom) is susceptible of a twofold division—into conquered territory, and states whose governments are supported by foreign powers. The Austrian province of Venetian Lombardy constitutes the first division; Tuscany and the small duchies, the kingdom of Naples, and the Papal States, constitute the second. In this last, again, the Papal States must be distinguished from the others, inasmuch as the latter are but the satellites and advanced posts of Austria, while the former is subject to the interferences, and placed under the so-called protection, of the whole Catholic world. The condition of the conquered territory is by far the best, if we have regard to mere guarantees for mild government. The satellite states are much in the same position as that in which the kingdom of Oude recently was; that is to say, the power which maintains their governments has nothing to do with their internal administration, and cannot be made responsible for it. Tuscany has had one or two mild princes, who have reigned long; and the majority of her subjects are quiet people. She is therefore at present comparatively prosperous and happy. Naples is governed by Bourbons of the worst sort, and she is for ever oppressed and turbulent. The natural checks and responsibilities exist in neither case. Austria is ready to

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keep down the people. She has no interest in seeing them contented or strong, but the contrary. The Roman government, if we look merely to the birth of its members, is the most Italian of all; but being confined to a priestly caste, and propped by foreign armies, it loses all the benefit which it might otherwise derive from this circumstance. The Papacy has never enjoyed much authority among the educated classes in Italy itself. Ever since the close of the revolutionary wars, Austria has maintained much the same attitude. She has not been actively aggressive. She has simply let it be understood that she is ready to assist governments against their subjects, when called in. In her menaces and demonstrations, as at Ferrara in 1847, she has sought the colour of treaty stipulations, and has taken care to show her teeth within (or but just outside of) the limits of law. She always holds out that she cares for nothing but the security of her own possessions; and it is scarcely likely that she has any plans for actually extending her Italian dominion. This astute policy renders her peculiarly difficult to deal with. She does not alarm the jealousies of the lesser states under her protection. Her protection is insidious, it is true, as regards Italy and Italians; but scarcely so as regards their rulers. She is, we think, by no means disposed to encroach on them, provided only that they will act in accordance with her policy, and admit her suzerainty. It is not unlikely that she may contemplate the absorption of Tuscany in the future; but the Roman states would present the same obstacle to Austrian conquest as to every other plan for the unity of Italy; and no menaces appear to be directed against Naples. To two things she is opposed—namely, to the drawing together of the bonds of Italian unity, because Venetian Lombardy would so be drawn more out of her sphere in the direction of national independence; and also to the extension of really liberal institutions in Italy, which would disturb her internal polity, and would indirectly, but no less powerfully, have the same effect of bringing out the national character of her Italian states. She does not disclaim this attitude by barely admitting the right of independent states to form leagues, and to promote internal reforms—Austria has always stuck too close to legality to question such simple principles; but she has conclusively shown, in Naples, in Tuscany, and in the Legations, and more recently in Parma, that she recognises no legitimacy in that popular pressure which alone can transform a despotic into a free state; and she has lately stated such to be her policy in the most arrogant terms. Whichever way we turn, therefore, whether we consider nationality as the means, and internal improvement as the end, or internal development as the introduction to the glories of

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nationality (and one view or the other, or both, must lie at the root of all wishes for the improvement of Italy), Austria stands in the way, a principle of pure evil. In one of his odd accesses of diplomatic candour, Lord Palmerston, by a despatch dated the 30th November 1848, instructs Sir George Hamilton, then English Minister at Florence, to say to the advanced Liberal Montanelli, then in power there, "if he [Montanelli] speaks again on the necessity of driving the Austrians out of Italy,"—"that if the Italians could accomplish this purpose by their own means, nobody could justly object to their doing so; and nobody can doubt that such an emancipation would greatly contribute to the welfare and happiness of Italy." This is, in fact, the one clear thing about the Italian question. Men of all parties agree in it, from the most moderate of the Moderates to the most exalted among the Republicans. The means of effecting it, and the hopes of seeing it done, can only be estimated after a review of the state of parties in Italy, and the attitude of neighbouring states in recent times.

Very soon after the close of the revolutionary war, and the reinstatement of the old sovereigns throughout Europe, ferments began in Italy. The governments followed the ordinary ways of restored governments; and the popular movements had little of that distinctness of conception or steadiness of purpose which afford so much ground for hope in the present Italian counsels. The real vassalage of the small states to Austria only began to be felt. The disregard that was to be paid to the little that England had been able to do for constitutional government at Vienna was then showing itself for the first time. The Italians had yet to receive one more lesson as to the emptiness of the promises made by revolutionary parties in France. There was no general uprising of all Italy, nor was there any where to be found any sufficient "covering army" to protect those separate states which took the initiative in besieging their own governments. The events of 1821 and 1831 ended in the discomfiture of the popular party, which from that time began to divide into the two classes whose dissensions are among the greatest Italian dangers. Joseph Mazzini sought to organise abroad a party with whom the unity and independence of Italy, it is true, superseded every other consideration, but who saw only one way to the object, and that a sudden and revolutionary one. Mazzini's views are so clear, and are set forth with such eloquence, and the uncompromising honesty and virtue of the man are so conspicuous, that it is difficult for those who seek his ideas at the fountain-head to escape being carried away by them; and it is with some sadness that we yield to the belief that he is not destined to save Italy in his own way. It is, however, essential to any sort of

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understanding of the Italian question to appreciate his arguments at their proper value, and entirely to dismiss the notion that he is a crazy and bloodthirsty fanatic, to whom argument is unknown. He is most valuable, as indicating where difficulties lie; and nothing but disappointment can ensue from neglecting these, and expecting a Piedmontese deliverance to take place in a manner and with results concerning which we are told nothing but that the one will be satisfactory, and the other unlimited.

"The men," says Mazzini, "who reject the republican idea with unreasoning antipathy are evidently as much in the wrong as those who make of it the *sine quâ non* of their political action. A republic may be a good or a bad thing, according to time and place. There is no general identical solution to the problem. Such could not be the case, unless the moral and intellectual education of humanity were every where identical. Governments cannot be improvised. They must spring from the very heart of the people—from the history, the education, the social organisation, the habits and tendencies of the country." Starting with these premisses, he inquires how Italian society has grown up, and what its crowned heads and its nobles have done for it; and he finds that their services have been very small. "The Italian tradition is eminently republican. In England the aristocratic element has a powerful influence, because it has a history: well or ill, it *has* organised society: it has created a power, snatched from royalty, by conquering guarantees for the rights of the subject; it has founded in part the wealth and the influence of England abroad. The monarchical element has still great influence over the tendencies of France, because it also claims an important page in the national history; it has produced a Charlemagne, a Louis XI., a Napoleon; it has contributed to found the unity of France; it has shared with the commons the risks and the honours of the struggle against feudalism; it has surrounded the national banner with a halo of military glory. What is the history of the monarchy and of the aristocracy of Italy? What prominent part have they played in the national development? What vital element have they supplied to Italian strength, or to the unification of the future existence of Italy? The history of our royalty in fact commences with the dominion of Charles V., with the downfall of our last liberties; it is identified with servitude and dismemberment; it is written on a foreign page, in the cabinets of France, of Austria, and of Spain. Nearly all of them the issue of foreign families, viceroys of one or other of the great powers, our kings do not offer the example of a single individual redeeming by brilliant personal qualities the vice of subalternity to which his position condemned him; not a single one who has ever evinced

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any grand national aspiration. Around them, in the obscurity of their courts, gather idle or retrograde courtiers, men who call themselves *noble,* but who have never been able to constitute an aristocracy. An aristocracy is a compact independent body, representing in itself an idea, and from one extremity of the country to another governed, more or less, by one and the same inspiration: our nobles have lived upon the crumbs of royal favour; and if on some rare occasions they have ventured to place themselves in opposition to the monarch, it has not been in the cause of the nation, but of the foreigner, or of clerical absolutism. The nobility can never be regarded as an historical element: it has furnished some fortunate *condottieri,* powerful even to tyranny, in some isolated town; it has knelt at the feet of the foreign emperors who have passed the Alps or crossed the sea. The original stock being nearly every where extinct, the races have become degenerated amidst corruption and ignorance. The descendants of our noble families at Genoa, at Naples, at Venice, and at Rome, are, for the most part, specimens of absolute intellectual nullity. Almost every thing that has worked its difficult way in art, in literature, or in political activity, is plebeian. In Italy the initiative of progress has always belonged to the people, to the democratic element. It is through her communes that she has acquired all she has ever had of liberty; through her workmen in wool or silk, through her merchants of Genoa, Florence, Venice, and Pisa, that she has acquired her wealth; through her artists, plebeian and republican, from Giotto to Michael Angelo, that she has acquired her renown; through her navigators,—plebeian,—that she has given a world to humanity; through her Popes,—sons of the people even they,—that until the twelfth century she aided in the emancipation of the weak, and sent forth a word of unity to humanity: all her memories of insurrection against the foreigner are memories of the people: all that has made the greatness of our towns dates almost always from a republican epoch: the educational book, the only book read by the inhabitant of the Alps or the Transteverin who can read, is an abridgment of the history of the ancient Roman Republic. This is the reason why the same men who have so long been accused of coldness, and who had in fact witnessed with indifference the aristocratic and royal revolutions of 1820 and 1821, arose with enthusiasm and with a true power of self-sacrifice at the cry of *St. Mark and the Republic, God and the People!* These words contained for them a guarantee. They awoke in them, even unconsciously to themselves, the all-powerful echo of a living past, a confused recollection of glory, of strength, of conscience, and of dignity."

Mazzini considers that the modern condition and wants of

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his country point the same way as his historical deductions. In saying that it is his peculiar merit to fix on independence of foreigners, and especially of Austria, as the one thing needful for Italy, we only mean to assign to him the highest place among those who in recent times have branded this idea on the Italian mind. But his conclusion is, that Italy can never be independent as long as it is divided; and that foreign countries would for ever make use of the jealousies subsisting between the present states to obtain a pernicious influence in the Peninsula. Seeing no hope of ejecting Austria by Italian arms alone, without the united action of all Italians, he always objected to the idea of a kingdom of North Italy, on the ground that while it fell far short of the aspirations of his own friends, it would at once excite the jealousy of Rome, Tuscany, and Naples, and disincline them to hazard all on the chances of a war which was to end in aggrandising Piedmont. Distrust of a merely federative organisation for Italy (of which Germany certainly does not present any very inviting specimen) makes Mazzini a political Unitarian. The question, then, arises, where the unity is to come from. There are but three alternatives—the union of all Italy under one of its present princes, under some new prince, or under a republican form of government. Mazzini, when the war of independence began, saw no Italian prince equal to the occasion. He did not believe that Naples, Rome, and Florence would willingly acknowledge the primacy of a Turinese king, unless the House of Savoy, forgetting all care for its own immediate safety, and throwing itself upon the Italian sentiment, performed services so brilliant and so successful as to insure the elevation of a Savoyard prince upon the shields of an enfranchised multitude of warrior freemen. For this he was prepared. To such a king he would have sacrificed his darling republic. He even admits that if the force of circumstances had created a kingdom of North Italy, and compelled the other governments of the Peninsula to acknowledge it, it might have been acquiesced in. But he saw in Charles Albert only "the Hamlet of monarchy." Driven unwillingly into the war by the dread of losing Genoa, the dread of revolutionary movements at home, and of a Lombard republic at his doors, allured by the prospect of acquiring the Milanese as an aggrandisement to his dynasty,—an ambition which was traditional in his house, and which had more than once been nearly attained,—the king was not only reasonably suspected of being too small in his aims, too cold and timid in his resolves, but had other fatal disadvantages. Austria, at the very beginning of the war, gave out by her diplomatists that she would pursue no advantage on Piedmontese territory. Wherever this transpired, it was enough to shake Italian confidence in a king who, though he might

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gain by Italian victory, would not share Italian ruin in case of defeat. But besides its obvious practical bearing, this policy on the part of Austria was known to be hers by tradition, and was connected with an attitude on the part of Piedmont, which, as it had been held through a long historical period, might easily be supposed necessarily connected with her position. She had been a border state, maintaining a restless military independence by vacillating between France and Austria; convenient to both as a barrier, and therefore, though constantly attacked, never crushed by either. These were not hopeful antecedents. Charles Albert, moreover, was personally obnoxious for having in early life deserted an insurrection which looked to him as its leader, and having signalised the first years of his reign by what the now stanch friend of his dynasty, Signor Gallenga, describes as "terrible means of repression,"—means so terrible, indeed, as to inspire Gallenga himself, as he tells us, with the design of assassinating the tyrant. Small blame to Mazzini, then, if he approved Prince Metternich's penetration in saying, "An Italian monarchy does not enter into the idea of the factious,—a positive fact must turn them from the idea of a monarchical Italy; *the possible king of such a kingdom exists on neither side of the Alps*,—they are marching straight towards a republic." Thus, from the supposed necessity of making a single state of Italy came a seeming politic defence of that republican course which seemed to Mazzini the only noble and beautiful one. Another great change was involved. Rome was necessary to a united Italy. Any other capital would be inconceivable; any Italy which did not include her would be an abortion. The downfall of the pontifical power was therefore a necessity. With these conceptions chimes in the only belief of Mazzini which we feel justified in calling a sheer fanaticism, the identification (namely) of the starting-point for a religious regeneration of Italy (and through her of the world) with a particular geographical centre. With Mazzini that centre is Rome. His new religion, whose ensign is "There is no God but God, and the People is his Prophet," and which claims a special inspiration for the assembly of believers, is to be enthroned there on the ruins of the Papacy. To us this is but another form of the old delusion of Popery,—a too great reliance on a mystical, collective, inspired triumphant body,—an expectation of seeing the highest glories of religion manifested in religious organisations, in place of treating the organisation as a transitory, relative, partial, imperfect help to the fears and fightings of the individual soul. We feel in the dim chambers of consciousness for

> "the world's great altar-stairs,
> That slope through darkness up to God."

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Mazzini thinks that he can see them, hewn in shining marble, planted on his own Capitol, with the angels ascending and descending between the eternal city of this earth, and the city which is eternal in the heavens. We have all heard of "an Asian mystery." We do not think Mazzini's "Roman mystery" a *charlatanerie* like that; but we can as little acknowledge that Rome is the predestined perpetual seat of the manifestations of the Holy Ghost, as we can attribute the same dignity to Jerusalem or to Sinai.

We have been thus particular in stating Mazzini's ideas, because, although they are all to be found in his short and accessible work, *Royalty and Republicanism in Italy*, yet nevertheless the works of his opponents, which contain ideas much more familiar to the English mind, and which are echoed by the *Times* newspaper and those who swear by the *Times*, have so successfully raised the cuckoo-cry of "frenzy" and "fanaticism" in connection with his name, that the difficulties which he has set himself to solve, and the reasoning power which he has forged into a weapon of high temper in the glowing fire of his patriotic and religious fervour, are apt to be forgotten.

The ideas of his opponents can be more compendiously stated. Gioberti, Balbo, and D'Azeglio, accepted to the full the doctrine that Italy, to be free and prosperous, must be independent of foreign influence. Perhaps they added to their hatred of Austria a little more wholesome dread of France than the Mazzinians. They preached loyalty in the several Italian states, abstinence from conspiracy, a reconciliation between peoples and their princes, the cry for constitutions, and a federal league to expel the barbarian. Gioberti looked more to a papal, Balbo to a Piedmontese primacy.

And here let it be admitted that Mazzini showed considerable foresight in prophesying the failure of the Moderates in the immediate objects of the war of independence. There was a total want of genius and self-abandonment in Charles Albert. He was wasting his time about fortresses, and keeping an open road back to Piedmont, when he should have been sealing the passes of the Alps against Austrian reinforcements. He was clutching at the extension of his own kingdom by votes and political action, when the hero of the occasion should have felt that his destiny was in his sword, and that no royal dominion in North Italy was worth a straw unless it was established by acclamation. The ill-fated Pope was unsettling the minds of his subjects by disowning the acts of his own generals and stultifying the declarations of his own ministers. The Neapolitans were constitution-making and quarrelling at home, and holding their grasp of Sicily, when every thought and effort was wanted for

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the war, and when the king's hands should have been strengthened at every forward step, the Liberals at the same time taking care to keep him straight in the path of independence. Thus far we go with Mazzini, that we firmly believe that the unifying principle of Italian nationality is to be found in the hearts of the people, not in the policy or ambition of any one prince or company of princes. We differ as to the meaning of "the people," and the mode of its action.

We have not yet adverted to the attitude of France; and in the secrecy which envelops the designs of her present ruler, her past tendencies and aims should be scanned. M. de Lamartine, in his work entitled *Le Passé, le Présent, et l'Avenir de la République,* tells us very frankly what the ideas of his party were. If Piedmont succeeded, France was to seize Savoy and Nice, not being able "to allow, or to allow without misgiving, that a power of the second order, at her very door, should suddenly alter into one of the first." If Piedmont failed, France was to come in as protector, and to assume a leading influence throughout Italy, and Lombardy, as well as Venice, was to have "a political existence, constitutional and semi-national," "guaranteed by the joint protectorate of France and England, the basis of Italian emancipation." M. de Lamartine has quite recently gone still further in the statement of his notions of Italian politics. According to the *Cours familier de Littérature,* Italy was to grow up to maturity as a federal union, "somewhat analogous to the Hellenic confederation of the towns, kingdoms, and republics of the Peloponnesus and the islands, *under the protection of the Macedonian phalanxes.* No doubt there would have been agitations, blind restlessness, anomalies, inexperience, collisions, rivalries, excess in resistance; *but the active armed mediation of France would have been a dictatorship of common safety*—accepted from necessity, until the time when this amphictyony of allies could be replaced by the amphictyony of the Italians, established and armed in their own towns." *Non tali auxilio nec defensoribus istis,* say we; and we wonder not that the Italians should have been very slow to invoke French assistance. The Piedmontese statesmen had an especial aversion to it, and it was not till their affairs were becoming desperate that it was solicited. General Cavaignac was then in power, and appears to have been as anxious as any English statesman for the maintenance of peace. His fear was lest the French feeling in favour of intervention should be too strong for him; and his object in obtaining the concurrence of England in a pacific mediation was, to have an answer to those of his countrymen who wished to see the army of the Alps set in motion. "A well-meaning honourable diplomacy! It wished," says Signor Gallenga, "for justice; but

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it showed itself far more anxious—over-anxious—for peace. It forgot that durable peace should be grounded on justice; that it can best be secured by him who sues for it, showing all the time that he has means to enforce it." This is especially true of the English diplomacy of that period. Austria saw quickly enough that the friendly mediation meant nothing; and she fed the statesmen who liked to seem to play a liberal part with a few proposals which meant as little, but which they chose to consider as making it worth their while to proceed. It is matter for wonder to any one reading the correspondence that even the most wilful blindness could have been duped in so barefaced a way, and that Lord Palmerston's faith in the power of political sermons, unsupported by arms, should have survived the lesson.

Piedmontese statesmen, in 1848, counted upon two things—the internal prostration of Austria (which might have been decisive, if she had had her Hungarian and her Italian war on her hands at once), and the threat of French intervention. It was computed that Austria would retire, after less decisive Italian successes than would otherwise be necessary, for the mere sake of avoiding a conflict with those Gallic legions, which it was never intended to call in unless they could be brought in under such conditions as would not lay Italy at the feet of France. The game was played too fine. Lamartine's government, which would have intervened (with the objects now candidly confessed), fell before its aid was solicited, and before an unsolicited descent could take place. Austria knew that she might neglect the French danger from the commencement of the Palmerston-Cavaignac negotiations.

Let us now approach the existing and future Italian question, having due regard to the new elements imported into it since the events of 1848-9. We must choose whether we will follow Mazzini or not; and if the expression of English opinion is to have any weight with those who own his leadership, its organs must show that they appreciate both his motives and his arguments.

We admit, then, the alarming difficulties which beset the notion of a federal Italy; we admit that the external sources of peril to its independence and its good government would be in great measure removed, if its union into a single strong state could be effected. But we do not believe that this is yet possible. Granting that a revolutionary movement of the whole of Italy, from the Alps to the sea—such a convulsion as that which destroyed the French monarchy—could annihilate the Austrian power in Venetian Lombardy; and granting too that, as far as Austria alone was concerned, the rest of Europe might either stand neutral, or marshal its forces on opposite sides, one moral

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obstacle would still remain — the influence of the Papacy. Mazzini's first error is to undervalue the black-frocked army which the Pope can bring into the field. The great Napoleon committed no such error. Is it credible, that while Europe is governed, as we see it governed, by despotic monarchs, who rule, in opposition to the intelligence of their kingdoms, by virtue of the ignorance and superstition of the masses who believe in the Pope, its rulers should neglect such an ally, refuse his prayers for reinstatement, and throw him upon the tender mercies of a Roman Republic? What if he found it for his interest to play the game of Liberalism all over the world? It is true that we, for our parts, should have more confidence in priestly instincts remaining true to the cause of despotism,—in the power of the keys of the kingdom of heaven continuing to preserve fairly amicable relations with the power of the keys of the coffers of earth. But we cannot believe that governments biased by every interest and every passion against revolutionary movements should neglect so excellent an occasion as would be presented by the solicitations of a suppliant Pope. Nor can we think that Italy would be able to stand against the combination which would be made against her. The great powers are accustomed to having bits of territory and bits of influence, within her borders, and would be likely enough to agree on the way of making and keeping her disunited. A strong and united Italy is no continental *beau idéal.* We have seen what French republicans think of it; and we should not place much more confidence in Bonapartists or Orleanists. Germany, with all her pedantic enthusiasm about her own nationality, has no disposition to fraternise with Lombardy. Rome is the *ποῦ στῶ* of Mazzini; and the Pope is the *protégé* of France and Austria, who have been accustomed to look on North Italy as a mutually-convenient debateable land, where each has some hold, and where the two have often contended.

We further incline to the belief that Mazzini is correct when he says that at present nothing but a universal republican revolution in Italy would accomplish its sudden unification, or direct its forces to an irresistible combined onset against the Austrian. He must have the benefit of the admission that this expedient is yet untried. The question is, whether it can be tried, or ought to be desired. On this head we must speak with some diffidence. On the general European considerations which strengthen the Pope, we are in as good a position to form an opinion as others. Of the dispositions of Italians we have but imperfect and contradictory information. It is nevertheless our persuasion that such a rising would not represent the deliberate, permanent sense of the Italian *people,* properly so called. It is contrary to

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our political faith that such risings are to be the constructive influences of modern Europe, however necessary they may be as besoms of destruction. The wild rush of impassioned genius which from time to time seems to lift a whole nation to heaven, even as it buoys up the solitary soul of a national prophet, has its use,—has more than its *use*, in any low material sense; for it has a sacredness and a power which few earthly things possess. But the power of popular passions and affections is beneficially felt in ordinary life only when they vivify institutions, and are kindly mixed with coarser and heavier matter. Mazzini says that those who think as we do *have no faith.* He is wholly wrong. We believe in the same elements as himself; but we believe that noble agencies act by slowly transforming manners and institutions, not by sudden and violent convulsions.

Mazzini exclaims against modern monarchists for having no real monarchical passion like that which cried, "My God, my king, and my lady-love!" He says, that their "passive, inert acceptance, without affection or veneration," is merely "the result of moral cowardice, of a blind fear of the people, to whose upward movement they desire to oppose monarchy as a barrier." Not so. Monarchy has, it is true, become little more than a symbol with constitutionalists; but it is the badge of a political faith as distinct and assured as his own;—*a faith in minorities.* We believe in *the people;* but we believe that a people is a composite and not a simple body; not a single organ, which, as in the lower forms of animal life, fulfils all functions in succession, but an organism, whose parts and functions are not mutually interchangeable. We believe that in all political life of which we have any experience there must and ought to be *upper classes;* that these are the natural organs of the very people itself for purposes of government; and that the primacy which falls to their share in the order of nature is not to be resigned by them with impunity. Mazzini deifies popular passion. We too can glory in its majestic and beautiful manifestations; but, like all passion, it cannot be allowed its full sweep. Great is inspiration, whether religious, poetical, or patriotic; but it is not by inspiration that the practical business of the world can be transacted.

Having this strong faith, we cannot but see the phenomena of recent Italian politics by its light. Believing that the Moderates were right in theory, we can put but one interpretation on the lead which they took in the Italy of 1848. Mazzini says that the Republicans waived the immediate prosecution of their designs for the sake of trying the experiment wished by the Moderates, and in order not to throw away a single chance of union. This could not have been unless the bulk of influential society had been anti-republican. We are forced to believe that a

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republican victory would have been the victory, not of the whole nation, but of a section only; and if of a section only, not the section which could be trusted with unlimited power. Straws show the set of the wind; and we know that the Roman parliament, before and at the time of the Pope's flight, was overawed by the galleries, and that its votes were influenced by their shouts. Sure and certain is the instinct of distrust which waits on that manifestation. Let monarchy be confessed to be but a symbol. We *are* all Republicans; but Mazzini has identified himself with the Republicanism of numerical majorities. We do not believe that in 1848 this was the political creed which was entitled to rule in Italy. Without attaching credence to the imputations of terrorism after the Pope's flight so freely cast on the Republicans of Rome, the general acquiescence in their rule on the part of the country is easily to be accounted for. Boldness in seizing the reins of power is a great thing in perplexed times; and the presence of an invading army was calculated to rally all men round a *de facto* government. The Moderates really and truly put their creed in abeyance for the sake of national union.

Have the changes of these last years been in favour of republicanism in Mazzini's sense? We apprehend not. The great fact of the time is the maintenance of constitutional government by the Sardinian kingdom. We now hear in Italy the name of a wealthy, aristocratic, parliamentary minister, skilled in debate, and bidding for the leadership of the national party. We find that Manin, one of the most respected of republicans, the head of the Venetian government during its trying career, counsels reliance on Piedmont, and looks to that quarter for the salvation of Italy. Men of all parties admit that no extemporised government was ever better conducted than the Venetian; nor was Manin himself a man deficient in firmness or in love for republican principles. He was one of the very few who resisted the incorporation of Venice with the kingdom of North Italy; and he only yielded at last to the determined pressure of the cities of the mainland,—a pressure, by the way, the existence of which is undoubted, and a striking proof that many, even of the urban populations, had no mind for Mazzinism. He had previously shown his firmness in another way, by telling the crowds in St. Mark's Place very plainly that no government could subsist on the terms of defending its every step in the public square.

What, then, are the hopes of Piedmont for itself; and what would be the bearing of its prosperity on the general Italian question?

Addressing Englishmen, we have nothing to do but to assume that the *primâ facie* case is in favour of Piedmontese well-doing. The characteristic of a government at once strong and free is,

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that in the presence of an extended franchise the upper classes of the state are nevertheless its men of affairs. There is no good augury for a democracy where the arbitrary power at the base of the state deters the men of leisure and culture (who will necessarily be of the opulent class) from seeking public station. An oligarchy, and its worst form, a bureaucracy, on the other hand, demoralises both the governors and the governed, from the absence of responsibility for the one, and of a political education and *status* for the other. Of course, what we seek is, not a monopoly of office for the upper classes, but a constitution in which their natural precedence will be left to work out its legitimate consequences, and will be rather cherished than broken down. This would seem to be the case in Piedmont. Representatives of all opinions can get into parliament; but the upper classes have their full share of the seats. Mr. St. John's honest and useful though very prejudiced book gives the following summary of the electoral laws:

"The House of Deputies of the Sardinian States is composed of two hundred and four representatives, of whom twenty-two come from Savoy, twenty-four from Sardinia, and one hundred and fifty-eight from what are called the Italian provinces of Terraferma. The electoral law was promulgated by Charles Albert in 1848, shortly after the Constitution (March 4th). Its basis is tolerably large. The Piedmontese elector is required to possess only a comparatively small qualification; that is to say, must pay not less than forty francs of direct taxation, or must belong to certain liberal professions. In the province of Savoy, Nice, Oneglia, San Remo, Genoa, Chiavari, Levante, Novi, Savona, Albenga, and Bobbio, a payment of twenty francs is sufficient. No religious belief interferes with the exercise of the electoral right. All electors must have reached the age of twenty-five, must know how to read and write (*a clause that very properly excludes two-thirds of the population*), and must not have been subject to any criminal punishment, or be in a state of declared insolvency or judicial interdiction.

Any one may be elected, provided he be a subject of the king, have completed the age of thirty years, and be in the enjoyment of his civil and political rights. The absurdity of requiring any further qualification for a representative, except the confidence of his constituents, has not been repeated from England.

The deputies are elected for three years; their mandate expires of itself at the end of that time.

There are, as I have hinted, some citizens who may be electors independently of all payment of taxes, as professors in the public schools, acting members of the Royal Academy, &c. On the other hand, there are citizens who cannot be elected deputies; as paid and removable functionaries in the judicial order, members of the diplomatic corps on a mission, intendants-general of divisions or provinces, &c.

To the Chamber of Deputies must not be admitted a number of

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functionaries and royal paid *employés* greater than a quarter of the total number. In case such a proportion be overpassed in the elections, the house is to draw lots for the names of those whose elections are to be annulled. When the number of *employés* is complete, all new elections of such persons are null and void.

The country is divided into two hundred and four electoral colleges. Each college names a deputy. The electoral colleges are convoked by the king.

A Piedmontese election very little resembles an English one. The voting is by ballot; and the experiment seems to be successful in every way. Our members of parliament are very fond of praising Piedmont, but they never by any chance hit upon this topic. They do not like to remind the country, that in a constitutional monarchy on the Continent secret voting is carried on so well, that we never hear of sorry knaves selling and sorrier knaves purchasing votes, directly or by their agents. Wealth may sometimes exert undue influence."

Such being the composition of the Lower House, we are further reminded of English ideas by the existence of an Upper House, the privileges of whose members flow from the crown, and which comprises most of the old aristocracy (the seats, however, being not hereditary, but held for life only), and by the fact that the sentiment of reverence for the kingly office is still widely diffused among the aristocracy and the lower classes, while it is much weaker in the middle class. The working of the constitution is commended to English good opinion by two facts. In the first place, Piedmontese legislators have shown themselves to be statesmen by not acting like children, who dig up the seeds they have sown to see whether the roots are striking. They have not begun destroying the stability of their polity from the outset by a fretful logical discussion of first principles, and perpetual agitation of theoretical organic changes. "The compilation of the statute," says Signor Gallenga, "was hastily proceeded with; it was, in the main, but a copy of the French charter of 1830; and, by a strange coincidence, it came out hardly a score of days after its prototype had been torn to pieces, like an old rag, by a Parisian mob; it came into operation in the midst of all the throes of the Lombard war; its Upper Chamber—the list of senators—was drawn up by the king when plunged into the gravest difficulties of the first campaign. Nevertheless the Piedmontese were too wise to quarrel with their *improvised* statute, or to wish for the immediate modification of its provisions. All they asked for was a certain amount of orderly rational freedom; the equality of all subjects before the law; uniformity of taxation; inviolability of person and property; the right of petition and association, and freedom of the press." In the next place, the first efforts of the legislature have been directed to putting a wealthy and arrogant priesthood under the

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law. Special priestly jurisdiction and immunities have been abolished; but "to disengage the civil law from all ecclesiastical interference" in respect to marriage, breaking cloister, and other things, it has been necessary to begin by going to the source of church insolence, by diminishing the preposterous numbers of the clergy and the overgrown wealth of church-dignitaries. We believe that the extent of former abuses, and the nature of the moderate and tentative reforms which have as yet been made, are both but imperfectly known in England. The statistics of the question will be found fully stated in Signor Gallenga's valuable history. Suffice it to observe, that the church was "a church whose revenue exceeded one-tenth of that of the whole landed property in the kingdom; a church whose bishops, canons, &c. revelled in a wealth vastly above that which is deemed a competency for similar dignitaries in other Catholic communities." There is a clergyman for every 214 inhabitants, while the proportion in Belgium is one in 600, and in Austria one in 610. "There are Piedmontese bishops whose revenue is above 100,000 francs; that is, double the stipend allowed to the French or Belgian primate, and equal to that of all the Belgian prelates put together." The revenue of chapters is sixteen times as large as that of Belgium, a country of about the same population. Notwithstanding this vast aggregate wealth, there were 2540 parish livings with incomes under 500 francs, and to eke out these, and for other ecclesiastical purposes, the state paid in general and local taxation about 5,000,000 of francs! Under these circumstances, the confiscation of all church-property, and the conversion of the clergy from a proprietary to a salaried order, was, it seems, proposed, but pretty generally disapproved:—a proof that here, at all events, influences were at work to counteract any tendency which there might be to a system of pure governmental centralization. At last, after many struggles, a law has been passed taxing the dignitaries and wealthier incumbents, and suppressing some convents, and a great number of chapters and sinecures; the proceeds of the measure being vested in a mixed commission, under government influence, to be applied to church purposes, in lieu of the former state contribution. As a last resource, the bishops presented a specious scheme of voluntary self-taxation, on condition of the abandonment of the obnoxious bill. The king was deceived by it. He changed his ministry, and "conferred with liberal statesmen of every shade to see if any could be found to whom the bishops' proposition might seem admissible." He did not succeed; but he attempted no *coup-d'état*, and did not even seek reactionary counsels. Count Cavour returned, and the bill was passed.

The diminution of the numbers of the secular clergy seems

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for the present to be left to existing agencies. By old *concordats*, Sardinian bishops, though nominated by the Pope, must be presented by the crown; and the crown is at present keeping sees vacant as they fall in. The lessening of the emoluments and power of the clergy is moreover counted on for decreasing the number of the aspirants to holy orders.

The slight and imperfect sketch which our limits allow of the Piedmontese constitution, and of the course which a leading reform is taking under it, contains in itself the statement of abundant grounds of hope. Most of them are obvious at once to an English reader, and we shall comment on one or two only.

It is characteristic of a constitutional system, that *resistance* has its place there as well as progress. We do not refer to artificial checks in the state machine, devised without reference to national traditions,—though continental Liberals attribute a liking for such devices to English thinkers,—but we take the position of the Romish church in Piedmont. We find that it is, *de facto*, a great power; that the people at large are not prepared for a total rupture with the Pope; but that there is a steady *set* of national intelligence towards curbing the priesthood. The revolutionary way would be to take the most advanced principles, and make a clean sweep of every thing which stood in the way of their logical consequences; to apply such a force, that resistance would vanish from the problem. The constitutional way is to gain one small practical step at a time.

But that is not all. The constitutionalist not only pockets small gains with a cheerful countenance,—that is but half his quality; the other half is that he takes care that what he gets he will win as a right, not receive as a favour. The Piedmontese would not get relief from taxation by favour of the bishops. Their pecuniary gain was to be also a political victory.

Another matter of congratulation is, the good faith of the king. This is admitted on all hands. He is a *re galantuomo*. All that Mr. St. John can find to say against this is, that he would like to see a Washington on the throne; not satisfied with keeping his word, but ever anxious to develop popular liberties. We, for our parts, look on this stanchness to engagements as the one essential matter. The pedagogue king is by no means a true constitutional creature. It is not a king's business to develop liberties; it is his business to recognise and protect what is established. We repeat it, *distrust* is the great bane of continental politics. Banish that from any corner of Europe, and you have there a safe seed-plot for liberty and progress. Confidence is the indispensable condition of obtaining time for growth. What are called "revolutionary

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excesses" are the result of its absence. Slavery to logic is a great mischief; but the habit of rushing to extreme courses mainly proceeds from the feeling that there is no security for the retention and improvement of limited concessions. An Englishman ought to know more of the genesis of constitutions than Mr. St. John appears to do. Our Tudors, our William of Orange, did not set themselves to the task of being ciphers on theory. They exercised the power they had, and were not disposed to part with any that they could help. But they knew their limits; and when they gave up a prerogative, it was not asked for again. Elizabeth was a *re galantuomo* in her time, and so was William. It was only when a slippery race like the Stuarts were on the throne that revolutionary measures were necessary.

Before leaving the bright side of the subject, we will cite what Mr. St. John himself concedes to the Piedmontese constitution:

"Freedom in Piedmont has produced great and probably ineffaceable results. It has destroyed many intolerable grievances; but it has done something better. It has called into existence, or rather allowed the development, of a considerable class of citizens who are ready to perform the duties and accept the sacrifices necessary to the victory of truth. Its very existence, even under difficult and unfortunate conditions, is a promise to the rest of Italy, and a threat to its corrupt governments. To all who value moral over material advantages the condition of Piedmont must appear immeasurably superior, not only to that of the whole peninsula, from Lombardy to Naples, but to that of France."

The case has its less satisfactory symptoms. The worst is, the general apathy on the subject of elections. Mr. St. John admits that there is little corruption of the electors. He asserts that the corrupting influences are reserved for the representatives, and are exercised only too successfully. He also says that the Radicals cannot conscientiously return any but men of their own party, and that they fear a *coup-d'état* if they return too many of those. To these two causes—the uncertainty of the conduct of representatives when they fall under the influences of Turin, and the fear of provoking violent absolutist measures—Mr. St. John refers the apathy to which we have alluded. He gives one detailed account of an election for Sassari which, if in all respects authentic, ought to prevent Englishmen from loading Count Cavour with unqualified panegyric. It seems that the electoral college whose proceedings are in question contained 427 electors, and was composed of two sections. When they were first called together there appeared only fifty-one electors in the first section, who divided their votes between six candidates; and thirty-three

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in the second section, who divided their votes between seven candidates. There was a second trial between the two candidates who had the highest number of votes, but still upwards of 250 of the 427 electors held aloof. Of the 154 votes given, the government candidate obtained ninety-two, beating his opponent by a majority of thirty. This second election had been preceded by a government circular, recommending Sassari, "if it wished to improve instead of destroying its material welfare" ("that is," says Mr. St. John, "if they wished to have roads and bridges"), to add a deputy to the ministerial majority. The transaction was commented on in the Chamber; and Mr. St. John heard Count Cavour boldly defend such interference as necessary to the existence of constitutional government!

We gather pretty much the same character of Count Cavour, allowing for the opposite biases of the writers, from the works of Mr. St. John and Signor Gallenga. "At heart an aristocrat, a hater *profani vulgi*" (these are Signor Gallenga's epithets), he always used to be considered a member of the reactionary party in internal politics; and Mr. St. John says, that till he went to the Paris conferences he spoke with contempt of Italy and "the Italian idea." He differs, however, from his predecessor D'Azeglio, in seeing the necessity of filling the offices of state without reference to aristocratic connections; and it throws great light on his character and policy to be assured, as Mr. St. John assures us, that he evidently makes a great study of the art of parliamentary debate as practised in England. Though his family is old, his wealth is the result of his own and his father's exertions. As regards the chief offices of the state, he will admit "no brother near the throne." "The towering ambition of the prime minister," says Signor Gallenga, "fully commensurate with his rare energy and unequalled ability, brooks not only no rival, but even no sharer of authority, in those departments at least which he takes immediately into his own hands. With the exception of La Marmora for war, and Paleocapa for public works, Cavour will hardly admit any but men of mediocrity into his council." Signor Gallenga is enthusiastic when he speaks of the talents of the "massy-headed, hundred-handed, sleepless, indefatigable financier;" but he nowhere attributes to him any real generosity of political sentiment. On the whole, we seem to see a keen and powerful man, not overburdened with scruples, naturally falling in with the despotic party, till he perceives that new times require new measures; but then, probably without much natural predilection, boldly and firmly selecting parliamentary government as his line, and aiming at being the founder of a new race of Italian statesmen. We can easily understand that there is some (perhaps too much) foundation for the charge made against him of

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endeavouring to rule by the adroit administration of patronage. The idea is too prevalent on the Continent that constitutions are devices for substituting the rule of corruption for that of force; and Count Cavour's antecedents are not such as to entitle us to be surprised if he has somewhat of the Walpole about him. We have still less doubt that these charges are greatly exaggerated, and that those who make them are incapable of assigning their due weight to the legitimate causes which make a raw Radical member, for the first time invested with political responsibilities and brought into the society of educated politicians, shrink from acting on the "advanced" principles that previously seemed to him the only right and reasonable ones.

We can see nothing in the characteristics of Cavour hitherto adverted to that ought to be dangerous to the state. We can see ample reason for checking him by a prudent, watchful Opposition; ever ready to strengthen his hands when the national dignity is concerned, not prone to thwart him in details and beat down his prestige by a system of petty harassment, but at the same time forcing him to notice and respect its resistance to all courses savouring of bureaucratic absolutism. That his system occasions apathy instead of measured opposition, is a proof that Piedmont is not as yet secure in the possession of those qualities which guarantee the stability of a constitution.

The essence of constitutional genius, is to be able to make the best of a *de facto* government. If the body of a nation is bent upon and fitted for popular government, it ought to be able to secure it through monarchical and aristocratic forms;—always provided that military coercion and terrorism, whether exercised by means of a native standing army, or imposed by a threatening foreign power, are removed. It is not the good but the bad workman who complains of his tools. Republicanism is of many kinds. The republicanism of Mazzini and other continental liberals is a republicanism of numerical majorities, seeking to govern—not a city like mediæval Milan, or Florence, or ancient Athens; not a limited district protected by its political neutrality, comprising few extremes of wealth and poverty, and which has hardly within living memory admitted any aristocratic distinctions, like a Swiss canton; not a new and thinly populated region like the United States, where individual energy rises to the top in every department, and where foreign interference is unknown, —but an old European land, with its crowded and stationary and habit-ridden population, and all its class distinctions, and all the dangers and difficulties arising from its relations to bordering countries. It is a new thing. History has not led up to it, even in republican Italy. Its establishment would involve the overthrow, not of a court or a staff of functionaries, but of a whole

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social system, and must be admitted to be full of doubt and danger. The fear is lest ballast should be wanting. Surely the men who use the language which we have no doubt Mr. St. John very faithfully reports are not calculated to work such a system. Their grand characteristic appears to be an utter want of political patience; and it is this lack which more than any thing else would make us fear to trust the vessel of the state to European republicans. They ask for unlimited power because they are not equal to the duties of an Opposition. They do not know how to apply that firm and temperate pressure at the fitting time which is the true instrument of popular power; and as a man who fails in one profession thinks his talents require one more arduous, and accordingly attempts it, instead of trying back to some easier calling, so these men, finding that they can make little use of the opportunities given to citizens of a free parliamentary state, suppose that they need nothing but unfettered power. Any thing but a pure democracy "necessitates too much compromise and manœuvring." The alternations of ins and outs—*resistance*, in fact, of any kind, any thing but the arbitrary will of a single party —is a mere system of trickery and corruption. The only true polity is that which insures the Radicals being always "in" with an enormous parliamentary majority. Some of the formulæ of the Czar Nicholas and the Emperor Napoleon III. might very easily be adopted by these gentlemen. The want of an appreciation of the true duties and limits of opposition appears to us the great danger of Piedmont. If her young liberal blood sullenly holds aloof from the government, and merely awaits an opportunity of substituting something different, we shall cease to regard her as holding the hopeful position which we trust she does. Where is to be the end of letting successive insurrections grow out of chronic distrust? Suppose Valerio or Brofferio in the place of Cavour. Will not he, too, have his turn, and be accused of corruption and what not? Such attempts as we have cited to carry government influence into elections should be firmly resisted. But let the resistance lose all taint of insurrection. Let the minister feel that the will of the people is a power which he *must* respect, but that it will be felt only within the forms and spirit of the constitution.

In one word, the qualification of our confidence in the success of the Sardinian constitution, considered with reference to internal agencies merely, lies in this, that it yet remains to be proved whether or no the popular spirit will repel the corrupting or dragooning elements of bureaucratic despotism which form the great danger of modern states. We cannot flatter ourselves that the bane is altogether absent, and every thing depends on the prompt and energetic use of the antidote.

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But Piedmontese freedom is subject to another danger, which bears with equal directness on the general Italian question,—the proximity and power of Imperial France. This danger likewise must be frankly stated in England; for we do much mischief by applauding all kinds of fair appearances across the water, and seeming to sanction much of which we are in reality profoundly ignorant. Speaking of the laws regulating the press, Signor Gallenga says:

"By the original statute all suits for libel were to be tried by a jury—an institution introduced into the state only for political offences; but by a bill brought forward by the Government in February 1852, that part of the law was modified, and these suits have been referred to the ordinary magistrates. It was a measure of cruel necessity, adopted at the suggestion, or rather upon the demand, of arrogant neighbours, especially of France; and we may feel all the pain and humiliation it must have brought upon its originators. To screen the country from all quarrels with the same overbearing powers, undignified, and, if not arbitrary, at least vexatious measures have been occasionally, and are still, deemed unavoidable. The meek and tolerant D'Azeglio himself was, in 1853, compelled to avail himself of his discretionary powers as a minister towards aliens to banish a Russian democrat, Golovine, guilty of no other crime than the reproduction, in the *Journal de Turin*, of a letter by the minister himself, published in 1848, and containing some severe strictures upon the Austrian government."

We apprehend that Austrian dictation is now over in Piedmont. Arrogance on the one side, and unwilling compliance on the other, have been succeeded by hostile demonstrations on both; and while Austria concentrates her troops near the frontier, and fortifies Piacenza, Sardinia sets herself to render Alessandria once more impregnable, going about the work in no quiet way, but loudly calling on her citizens to show their patriotism by bringing voluntary contributions to the work. Meanwhile, it is understood that Napoleon smiles upon constitutional Piedmont. At the Paris Conferences, at all events, it was clear that the French and Sardinian statesmen understood one another. Moreover, on one occasion, according to Mr. St. John, the ministerial press welcomed with a chorus of praise the work of a Neapolitan named Trinchera, which proposed the division of the whole Italian peninsula into two parts—a kingdom of the North under Victor Emmanuel, and a kingdom of the South under Lucien Murat, disposing in this summary way even of the pontifical rule. In fact, we have no doubt that French influence is in the ascendant at Turin. Considering the threatening attitude of Austria, it is impossible that Piedmont should not seek to secure at least the passive, and probably the active, amity of her other dangerous neighbour. We do not seek to gloss over the

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danger to liberty which these relations imply; but we believe it to be a danger which must be incurred, and which can be guarded against. Piedmont is on the move, and cannot isolate herself from all her neighbours alike. What her citizens can do is, to cherish their own institutions, and by active participation in politics to give them such a hold through the length and breadth of the land, as to insure their being developed in a reasonably independent way. While it is foolish to talk as if the French despotism were not full of peril to states like Piedmont, we see no ground for despondency. We believe that the statesmen of that country are fully alive to the critical nature of their position. Throughout the events of 1848-9 a wholesome jealousy of France was every where apparent; and many a passage of suppressed bitterness in Signor Gallenga's recent book shows that at least one deputy would have applauded the Marquis Pareto with heart and soul when he said in answer to a question, "The French will not enter Piedmont unless requested; and as they will not be requested, they will not enter."

How, then, does the position of Piedmont bear upon the general Italian question? It is clearly idle to speak as if a speedy and sudden deliverance from foreign tyranny and domestic dissension were being contrived at Turin, and only waited to be revealed. It is also, to say the least of it, highly uncertain whether Count Cavour has even made a beginning; and whether his plan, proposed after the Paris Conferences, for the withdrawal of the Austrians from the Legations, and the taking of their place by the French troops now in Rome, pending the organisation of a national force, will be carried into effect. Nevertheless we think that there are slowly-working germs of hope in the newly-stirred soil.

In the first place, the moral effect of the position of Piedmont, as a free government at full work in Italy, can hardly be overestimated. The words "moral effect" are often used idly and with little thought—on the one hand, to signify influence exercised without actual conflict by him who can threaten potently; or, on the other hand, to signify a supposed efficacy of good example in converting sinners,—an efficacy which in political life is apt to remain in supposition. We use the words in neither of those senses. Piedmont, if she consolidates her liberties, will have a great moral effect: first on Europe generally, by furnishing a logical answer to the prejudice against the Italian capacity for self-government; secondly and chiefly, on Italy itself. It is the latter which we can hardly over-estimate. Nationality is altogether a creature of the mind, and its growth and recognition depend on moral causes. Many things must combine to render its existence possible. The ideal elements exist

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in Italy in profusion; but their realisation has been so long awaited, that they may well be insufficient for the scepticism of those practical men without whose aid they cannot be realised. Piedmont connects the idea with the facts. Its existence must justify the undefined hopes of the masses, and furnish a ready answer to the doubts of the cautious few. The anomaly of Austrian dominion is palpable to the dullest, when a free Italian nation, with an Italian life of its own, strengthens her Italian fortresses on the Austrian borders. To the class of moral influences is also to be referred the fact, that Piedmont is becoming the resort of men of intellectual and social weight from all parts of Italy. The effect produced by the mere spectacle of these men speaking freely on Italian subjects, as the honoured adopted children of a free Italian state, cannot fail to be incalculable. It is not for those who have a real *faith* in Italian nationality to doubt the impulse given to their cause by Piedmont.

When we leave the sphere of moral influence, and try to anticipate the time when, and the mode in which, Piedmontese *power* is to become available in the struggle for Italian liberty and independence, we are met by the greatest difficulties. Let not the English mind rest on a blind confidence in the destinies of Piedmont. If we are to do our own duty on the Italian question, we must keep our eyes and our ears wide open to catch the real import of every event. Piedmont is not strong enough to fight single-handed with Austria, nor can we point out any compendious way to a true Italian league, unless the fall of the Neapolitan Bourbons should enable another free Italian state to hold a thoroughly national course in the south. The Mazzinians will tell us either that the Piedmontese connection with the Western alliance was the work of men who would thankfully join both Austria and France in a conspiracy against freedom, or that the old game of French and Austrian rivalry in Italy is about to be renewed, with Piedmont for the time enlisted on the side of France, being allured thereto by baits which it is never intended to allow her in reality to grasp. We can at once appreciate the dangers of Italy, if we figure to ourselves Piedmont overreached by France, and playing the French game; Naples side by side with Austria in a liberticide war; and the plains of the Peninsula once more deluged with fraternal blood. It would be fatal to be blind to such dangers. We shall not be so presumptuous as to dogmatise on the countervailing hopes.

Only be this remembered. *Every* fresh step in Italy is fraught with danger. Her deliverance, on *any* theory, is a matter far more of faith than of sight. Spectators can but fix their hopes on those elements which seem to them richest in national strength. We have not faith in democratic convulsions. We

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long to see a country in which the sentiment of liberty is disjoined from that blind levelling spirit which France has so fatally impressed on many minds. We would fain hope that Mazzinian republicanism may yet be replaced, not only in Italy, but throughout Europe, by something more like our English republicanism. It is the despotism of numerical majorities, and not the mere absence of monarchial forms, that the Moderates of Europe are resolved not to have. If revolutions come, they must be looked manfully in the face, and, if possible, not be merely shrieked at. Meanwhile, we think it augurs well for any country when the breathless expectation of such tornadoes, be it an ardently hopeful or an affrighted expectation, is superseded by the work of gradually erecting free institutions, and strengthening them against their enemies. A free Italian country, with a press, and a parliament, and a noble army under the control of responsible ministers, and impregnable fortifications building on the side next Austria;—is not this in itself a sure and certain hope for the Italian cause, though we cannot as yet see the point at which the new forces are to be used? If we really believe in Italian nationality, we cannot doubt that the occasion will arise. It may be that Count Cavour's scheme for the evacuation of the Roman States by the French and Austrians may be carried out, and may involve the attainment of constitutional liberties at Rome under the guarantee of a Piedmontese army. It may be that Piedmont is destined to shield a roused Neapolitan people from those who have no right to withhold them from dealing retribution on their oppressors, and that England and France would bear her harmless in such a maintenance against Austria of the principle of non-intervention. Italy is full of contingencies. We would not dwell overmuch on the Western alliance. It would be cruel to hold out the expectation that England and France would be ready now to back Piedmont in an unprovoked crusade against Austria, or indeed that France would at any time be eager to create for herself a Mediterranean rival in a united Italy. But the provocation may come from Austria, and in such a form as to insure the antagonism of the Western powers. It is not for us to prophesy the future of Italy. Her revelation, like all revelations, will probably come in the form and at the time least calculated on beforehand. We can but look for the seeds of strength within her borders; and we claim for Piedmontese liberty that it be admitted to hold a new and high place among the hopes of Italy—one more development, and in a very new and very right direction —an additional chance for Italy and for Europe. One benefit at least will accrue from her position: her politicians will be able to instruct Europe on the real bearings of Italian questions. It is, in itself, the beginning of better days, that we look forward

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with reasonable confidence to receiving enlightenment from such a source.

Our fear in reference to the attitude of England is lest we should be contented to follow the lead of France too submissively. The place where the time for action now seems to be ripening is Naples. An English fleet would be supreme at Naples; and it cannot be supposed that the French emperor, having regard to his own position in France, would venture to oppose England were she to take a vigorous initiative in protecting an anti-Bourbon movement there against Austrian interference. Napoleon himself favoured the recent Italian discussion at Paris, and on his invitation England spoke out, through Lord Clarendon, with a plainness which his colleagues have since endeavoured to explain away. England must not be at the beck of a French emperor, to give an air of liberalism to his diplomacy, and then stop when her own principles and declarations bind her to go on. The French alliance will be an evil instead of a good if the ancient pride of England permanently submits to a secondary position. Selfishness is frequent enough, but legitimate self-assertion is one of the most commonly neglected of duties. We look for it at the hands of our rulers.

Art. VII.—SYDNEY DOBELL'S POEMS ON THE WAR.

England in Time of War. By Sydney Dobell, author of "Balder," and "The Roman." London, 1856. Smith, Elder, and Co.

An utter incapacity in a man to criticise himself adds very seriously to the labour of others who have to discharge that duty. Mr. Dobell is scarcely at the pains even of rough-hewing his poetry. He is like a sculptor who should present us with a block of marble, with here a toe finely carved out in it, and there a finger,—here the indication of a rounded arm, and there a delicately chiselled nose,—and should ask us to admire the statue thus shadowed out, and executed only in some few arbitrary details. His thoughts and fancies flow like the sounds from an instrument of music, struck by the hand of a child,—a jumble of sweet and disconnected notes, without order or harmony. There is an utter absence of the faculty which looks on what it has made and sees that it is bad, and discards it accordingly. The reader is harassed by the constant conviction forced upon him of a shallow and easily self-satisfied artistic nature, which can be content to go on producing new masses of crude thought and hasty expression, instead of pa-

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tiently labouring till some single poem, however short, has received all the perfection it is in the power of its author to bestow. There are few men of ordinary intellectual activity who could not, if they chose, vent a rude rhythmical and rhymed torrent in any assigned number of volumes, and intersperse it with more or fewer gleams of real beauty and power. Men of sense and taste are deterred from the attempt by some true knowledge of the proportion of the valuable to the commonplace in what it is in their power to produce. Men of cultivation are familiar with the productions of genius; they have learned to know and feel something of what goes to form a good poem. Completeness is necessary to them,—they shrink from what is chaotic. Their first effort is to give form and wholeness to their imaginative productions; and failing in this, they acknowledge their incapacity, and find a field for their energies elsewhere. A man who has been so unhappy as never to learn the great lesson that he must finish his work before he sends it out, lies under this disadvantage, that he is very liable to be misled in comparing his own productions with the poems of others. He will always be found instituting a mental comparison between the pearls and diamonds he has sown among his sand, and some arbitrarily disconnected phrase, or simile, or thought, in the poet he would rival. He is blind to the fact, that although his own fine thoughts and fine images are merely fine thoughts or fine images, and are just as good, or perhaps better, looked at singly than in the connection in which he has placed them, the others are living portions of a work of art, and injured by separation from a whole to which they give, and from which they receive, additional beauty.

That Mr. Dobell has an imaginative genius of more than ordinary richness his pages bear abundant evidence. It by no means follows that he is a poet. He prefers to let the waters from his spring trail in desultory ragged streamlets wherever the inclination of the ground may chance to lead them, rather than to lead them through defined channels, selected for the variety and harmony of their course. The field of literature is marshy with small and wasted driblets of genius; and poetry, such as this before us, springs, indeed, from a fountain more copious than is common, but could not possibly be worse husbanded, or more idly allowed to run to waste. Such poetry excites a momentary attention from the brilliancy of some of its expression, and the occasional real beauty of sentiment and wealth of imaginative ideas which it discloses; but human readers will not take the good and the bad in such close conjunction. It is impossible to derive permanent pleasure from a set of verses which have at least as much to repel as to

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attract. Men won't read such things twice. They make an effort, say they are fine, and forget them. More labour, more cultivation, more thought, than these poems bear any trace of, are requisite to enable a writer to hold a place in the field of English poetry. A man who can write some of the things we find here, and is content to write other things we also find,—who has got so much at his command and does so little with it,—must rest satisfied to be applauded by the *Athenæum*, and to pass into swift oblivion.

Mr. Dobell has another more positive fault. He is not simple. He is thinking how Dobell shall say something striking. All he writes is disfigured by affectation. No writer will be affected who gives the direct and simple, though the highest and fullest, expression to his thought—who is occupied only with the effort to speak himself most completely. He, on the other hand, will always be affected who is thinking how to write most effectively. A trained mind is as liable to this error as any other: but it has this advantage, that it will recoil from the results when it sees them; and if it cannot be simple, will avoid at least the more glaring results of being otherwise. But where a man has the richness of Mr. Dobell's mind without the restraints either of natural simplicity or a cultivated taste, the utmost he can produce is a wilderness of ill-combined and ill-contrasted thoughts and fancies, which seem brought together under only one dominant requisition—that all must be *fire*.' This is the one *sine quâ non*. And the condition must be confessed to be well adhered to. All is not intelligible, all is not true; much is not profound, much is but a whirlwind of imagery, raising only the dust of an idea; but all is *fire*—all is effective. It is the poetry of Posters. It should be printed in large capital type, and posted in the desert places of the metropolis. It calls aloud for attention. Morison and Rowland would like to know the secret of it. It involves a terrible expenditure of words; but expense in this direction is no object though readers like ourselves may grumble somewhat at the "damnable iteration" which distinguishes Mr. Dobell's style. Some of the more striking features of what may be called the emphasis of repetition so prominent in this book are an importation from America, where Mr. Edgar Poe invented a particular form of it, of which Mr. Dobell has availed himself very largely. The essence of poetry is truth: the essence of affectation is untruthfulness. A man who strives to give poetic expression to the real passions which a sailor and his mistress feel in the anticipation and fulfilment of their meeting will write a poem, if he is capable of writing poetry at

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all: a man who bends himself to say on this subject something very striking, very forcible — something which nobody has said before—which shall be utterly new, and very sure to elicit admiration—writes this sort of thing:

AFLOAT AND ASHORE.

"Tumble and rumble, and grumble and snort,
Like a whale to starboard, a whale to port;
Tumble and rumble, and grumble and snort,
And the steamer steams through the sea, love.

I see the ship on the sea, love,
I stand alone
On this rock,
The sea does not shock
The stone;
The waters around it are swirled,
But under my feet
I feel it go down
To where the hemispheres meet
At the adamant heart of the world.
O, that the rock would move!
O, that the rock would roll
To meet thee over the sea, love!
Surely my mighty love
Should fill it like a soul,
And it should bear me to thee, love;
Like a ship on the sea, love,
Bear me, bear me, to thee, love!

Guns are thundering, seas are sundering, crowds are wondering,
Low on our lee, love.
Over and over the cannon-clouds cover brother and lover, but over and over
The whirl-wheels trundle the sea, love,
And on through the loud pealing pomp of her cloud
The great ship is going to thee, love;
Blind to her mark, like a world through the dark,
Thundering, sundering, to the crowds wondering,
Thundering ever to thee, love.

I have come down to thee coming to me, love.
I stand, I stand
On the solid sand,
I see thee coming to me, love;
The sea runs up to me on the sand:
I start—'tis as if thou hadst stretched thine hand
And touched me through the sea, love.
I feel as if I must die,
For there's something longs to fly,
Fly and fly to thee, love.
As the blood of the flower ere she blows
Is beating up to the sun,
And her roots do hold her down,'
And it blushes and breaks undone
In a rose,
So my blood is beating in me, love.

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I see thee nigh and nigher,
And my soul leaps up like sudden fire,
My life's in the air
To meet thee there,
To meet thee coming to me, love,
Over the sea,
Coming to me,
Coming, and coming to me, love.

The boats are lowered: I leap in first,
Pull, boys, pull! or my heart will burst!
More! more!—lend me an oar!—
I'm through the breakers! I'm on the shore!
I see thee waiting for me, love!

A sudden storm
Of sighs and tears,
A clenching arm,
A look of years.
In my bosom a thousand cries,
A flash like light before my eyes,
And I am lost in thee, love!"

There are admirable strokes intermingled here, as in all this poetry. Such an idea as

> "The sea runs up to me on the sand:
> I start—'tis as if thou hadst stretched thine hand,"

has truth and beauty; but the tenor of the whole is false, strained, and affected. His description is of the same order:

> "I mused beneath the straw pent of the bricked
> And sodded cot, with damp moss mouldered o'er,
> The bristled thatch gleamed with a carcanet,
> And from the inner eaves the reeking wet
> Dripped; dropping more
> And more, as more the sappy roof was sapped,
> And wept a mirkier wash that splashed and clapped
> The plain-stones, dribbling to the flooded door.
> A plopping pool of droppings stood before,
> Worn by a weeping age in rock of easy grain.
> O'erhead, hard by, a pointed beam o'erlapped,
> And from its jewelled tip
> The slipping slipping drip
> Did whip the fillipped pool whose hopping plashes ticked."

It is the characteristic of this, and of much modern poetry, not to use imaginative forms and language as the expression of thought or sentiment, but to use thought and sentiment as a nucleus about which to amass imaginative forms or language. The idea, which should be central and all-important, is utterly subsidiary to the costume in which it is dressed. Mr. Dobell's poetry is, like flounces and crinoline, beautiful enough, but heaped in most outrageous excess about a very thin young person in the centre of it. He aims at the reverse of concentration. His problem is: Given this idea; how much

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poetry can I spin about it? Often he descends merely to amassing printed matter by virtue of endless repetitions. Often, again, he aims at effect by mere accumulation of one phrase or word. Thus:

WIND.

"Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold!
Oh the winter stark,
Oh the level dark,
On the wold, the wold, the wold!

Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold!
Oh the mystery
Of the blasted tree
On the wold, the wold, the wold!

Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold!
Oh the owlet's croon
To the haggard moon,
To the waning moon,
On the wold, the wold, the wold!

Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold!
Oh the fleshless stare,
Oh the windy hair,
On the wold, the wold, the wold!

Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold!
Oh the cold sigh,
Oh the hollow cry,
The lean and hollow cry,
On the wold, the wold, the wold!

Oh the wold, the wold,
Oh the wold, the wold!
Oh the white sight,
Oh the shuddering night,
The shivering shuddering night,
On the wold, the wold, the wold!"

or:

"Ah, weary, weary day,
Oh, weary, weary day,
Oh, day so weary, oh, day so dreary,
Oh, weary, weary, weary, weary, weary,
Oh, weary, weary!"

In this sort of writing arithmetical formulæ might be advantageously employed.

Wordsworth gives us the cuckoo and the echo in four lines:

"Yes, it was the mountain echo,
Solitary, clear, profound,
Answering to the shouting cuckoo,
Giving to it sound for sound."

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Imagine Mr. Dobell giving full effect to this idea on his favourite scale. Nothing less than shouting cuckoo through a quarto volume would afford him sufficient scope.

We confess we have little patience with the whole school of which Mr. Dobell is one of the most prominent members. Raggedness, want of finish, and exaggeration, which, as it necessarily must, often takes the form of distortion, are its characteristics. Fuseli tried the same thing in painting. He too sought for grandeur in what was strained and astonishing in the medium of his art. He more than exaggerated—he exasperated every thing. No man could sit on a stool without the muscles of his leg standing out as if he were engaged in a struggle for his life. People took snuff glaring at one another like tigers; and an elderly lady was always made as like Tisiphone as the artist could attain to. He too had genius, and even great genius; and wasted it by the want of simplicity and truthfulness. He too was once thought a great painter; and the rapid extinction of that brief notoriety, which was the sole and just reward of powers even so ample as his, misapplied as they were, may serve as a warning to those who are indulging the same false aims in another form of art.

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By
JAMES MARTINEAU
Reprinted in his
Essays, Philosophical &

Art. VIII.—PERSONAL INFLUENCES ON OUR PRESENT THEOLOGY: NEWMAN—COLERIDGE—CARLYLE.

The Arians of the Fourth Century; their Doctrine, Temper, and Conduct, chiefly as exhibited in the Councils of the Church between A.D. 325 *and A.D.* 381. By John Henry Newman, M.A., Fellow of Oriel College. Second edition, literally reprinted from the first edition. 8vo. London: E. Lumley. 1854.

Callista; a Sketch of the Third Century. By Dr. J. H. Newman. 12mo. London: Burns and Lambert. 1856.

The Defence of the Archdeacon of Taunton, in its complete form. Royal 8vo. London: J. Masters, and J. H. and J. Parker. 1856.

Notes, Theological, Political, and Miscellaneous. By Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Edited by the Rev. Derwent Coleridge, M.A. London: Moxon. 1853.

Charges to the Clergy of the Archdeaconry of Lewes, delivered at the ordinary Visitations in the years 1843, 1845, 1846. By Julius Charles Hare, M.A., Archdeacon. Never before published. With an Introduction, explanatory of his position in the Church with reference to the Parties which divide it. Cambridge: Macmillan and Co. 1856.

The Doctrine of Sacrifice deduced from the Scriptures. A Series of Sermons by Frederick Denison Maurice, M.A., Chaplain of Lincoln's Inn. Cambridge: Macmillan and Co. 1854.

St. Paul and Modern Thought: Remarks on the Views advanced in Professor Jowett's Commentary on St. Paul. By J. Llewelyn Davies, M.A., Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Incumbent of St. Mark's, Whitechapel. Cambridge: Macmillan and Co. 1856.

Passages selected from the Writings of Thomas Carlyle. With a Biographical Memoir. By Thomas Ballantyne. Post 8vo. London: Chapman and Hall. 1856.

"Theology," says Mr. Macaulay, in his mischievous way, "is not a progressive science." It may, however, be retrogressive; and it is sure to repay flippant neglect by lending its empty space to mean delusions. To its great problems *some* answer will always be attempted: and there is much to choose between the solutions, however imperfect, found by reverential wisdom, and the degrading falsehoods tendered in reply by the indifferent and superficial. Even in their failures, there is a vast difference between the explorings of the seeing and the blind. We deny, how-

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ever, that Christian theology can assume any aspect of failure, except to those who use a false measure of success. It is not in the nature of religion, of poetry, of art, to exhibit the kind of progress that belongs to physical science. They differ from it in seeking, not the *phenomena* of the universe, but its *essence*,—not its laws of change, but its eternal meanings,—not outward nature, in short, except as expressive of the inner thought of God: and being thus intent upon the enduring spirit and very ground of things, they cannot grow by numerical accretion of facts and exacter registration of successions. They are the product, not of the patient sense and comparing intelligence which are always at hand, but of a deeper and finer insight, changing with the atmosphere of the affections and will. Instead of looking, therefore, for perpetual advance of discovery in theology, we should naturally expect an ebb and flow of light, answering to the moral condition of men's minds: and may be content if the divine truth, lost in the dullness of a material age, clears itself into fresh forms with the returning breath of a better time.

With hope thus moderate, in no confidence that the millennium is due at present, but certainly in no despair of larger visions than to-day's, we propose to glance at the newer characteristics of English theology; to trace their origin and deviation from the data of the antecedent generation; and to indicate any common point towards which their several lines of direction may seem to converge. Few thoughtful men, who have lived through the greater part of the present century, can fail to be more or less aware of a vast change in the religious ideas and spirit of the time,—a change surely to a higher mood of faith, and even of doubt. A rapid survey of its social conditions, and of its chief authors, living and departed, may help us to appreciate its magnitude and tendency.

Prior to the peace of 1815, the disposable activity of the English mind was bespoken for the most part by the excitement of European politics. What religious movement there was arose out of the contagion of "French principles," or the recoil from them; and was so subservient to the antagonism of parties in the state as to acquire no independent or scientific character. The disaffection of Ireland, and its threatened invasion by Napoleon, gave an anti-catholic direction to the zeal of the day, and enabled the "Clapham sect," favoured by the prejudices of the king and the influence of Mr. Perceval, to attain a position disproportioned to its merits. After the close of the war, the numbers and social importance of this party continued to increase. There were large arrears of domestic politics to be dealt with; and the prominence held by the Catholic question for twelve or fourteen years made a watchword of the "Bible-cry," placed the "Evangelicals" in the

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van of the "Protestant interest," and Irish zealots in the van of the Evangelicals. This temporary leadership was not favourable to their permanent power. A fatal taint of political agitation infected the system; and once committed to the keeping of Hibernian rhetoric, it was spoiled for the quiet depths of the English mind.

One by one the elements of the political struggle succeeding to the war were discharged. The disabilities were swept away; the House of Commons was reconstituted; the municipalities were reformed; slavery was abolished. These great enterprises of action and resistance being over, and the strain of conflict withdrawn, attention was free for more reflective interests, and an inner movement began to replace the outward. The several religious parties, disengaged from their civic campaign, were sent home to their spiritual husbandry, and thrown upon their intrinsic resources of genius and character. The time, ever so critical for church and doctrine, had come at last,—the time of searching thought and quiet work. Other charity than would serve upon the hustings,—a deeper gospel than was known at apocalyptic tea-tables,—a piety stimulant of no platform cheers, became indispensable in evidence and expression of the Christian life. Especially at the centres of intellectual light,—the Universities, where the speculative faculties are trained,—were the reigning systems sure to be tried by the severest tests. Who could abide the day of reckoning? What party, formed amid the tastes and admirations of the previous age, could prove itself equal to the larger problems of a new time? Discharged from the work of middle-class agitation, and scrutinised by academic eyes, what had Evangelicism to show? Its men of genius?—if it has higher names than Wilberforce and Martyn, we never heard them. Its literature?—its favourites were Hannah More and Robert Montgomery. Its divinity?—it attained the altitude of Scott, Romaine, and Sumner. Its art?—the accomplishments of a modern day-school go beyond it. With faint appreciation of scholarship, and entire dislike of philosophy, it seemed studiously to repel the approaches of intellectual men; and accordingly had been illustrated by the devotion of no great mind. Its preachers, imperceptive of the English standards of good taste and reverence, could hardly be distinguished from Dissenters. Its creed, an endless chain of inflexible links, could only revolve in the same technical groove, and could apply itself to no resistance that lay out of its meridian. The cold-blooded rapture with which the most dismal pictures were drawn of this redeemed world, and a divine economy sketched which tortures every moral affection, plainly showed that the scheme was no longer realised, and had passed from an inner life to an outward opinion. The ecclesiastical doc-

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trine of the party was moreover purely Erastian, and left no intelligible barrier to separate the Anglican Church from the crowd of Nonconformists at home, and the unepiscopal Protestants abroad. These features had been little noticed while the merits which balanced them were still fresh; while the race of idle and worldly clergymen was disappearing before the new earnestness; while great philanthropic enterprises were led by the followers of Simeon; while the fact remained conspicuous, that there was a Christianity to be recovered for the land, and that these men had stepped forth to do it. But in the third decade of this century their "first works" had grown familiar; their weaknesses had become fixed; their type of character had cleared itself of its accidents and taken shape. It caught the fastidious eye of Oxford; and ere long, beneath that fine perception all the blemishes were brought out. A series of criticisms began, at first cautious and respectful; but gradually assuming a wider range and an intenser spirit, they assailed the Evangelical party with every weapon of antipathy which could be drawn from the armory of imagination or logic, Scripture or history. The weariness and distaste felt at Oxford towards the Church-Calvinists supplied the first impulse to the Tractarian movement; and it was chiefly with a view to displace them that a new theology was advanced. As its lines were filled in, and it acquired consistency and depth, a positive inspiration of genuine faith supervened and left all party passions behind. The great agent in this work was John Henry Newman; without an estimate of whose genius and influence only two-thirds of the theological history of contemporary England could be written. In him and the Oxford *ecclesiastical* reaction we have our *first* source of the modern development; not exactly first in time, or perhaps even in importance, but most conspicuous and best-defined, and therefore most tempting to begin with.

The sister University became the *officina* of no "Tracts;" and so no one talks of a "Cambridge theology." There is such a thing, nevertheless;—at least there is a theology, perfectly distinct and characteristic of the age, formed by Cambridge men, and born with the impress of Cambridge studies, though not elaborated on the spot. Coleridge taught at Highgate; but he poetised and learned at Jesus College half a century before: and the men through whom chiefly his Platonic gospel has passed into the heart of our generation, Julius Hare and Frederick Maurice, acknowledge the same *alma mater*. To those who are familiar with the writings of these eminent teachers, it will not appear fanciful if we trace the origin of the school to intellectual revolt against their academic text-books, Locke and Paley. Empirical psychology and utilitarian ethics are the permanent

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objects of Coleridge's hostility; and their removal is with him the prior condition of any morality or religion at all. It was reserved for Professors Sedgwick and Whewell, at a later time, to dethrone upon the spot the two established potentates in philosophy. But the murmurs against them had long been gathering. Their school had not stood still, and in its advance had become encumbered with able but inconvenient allies; betraying, in Bentham and James Mill, the tendencies full-blown which it had been often reproached with secreting. Long before the Genius of the place, starting at the shadow of its own philosophy, recoiled and took shelter with an elder faith, the sensitive and religious mind of Coleridge had not only found refuge there for himself, but opened an asylum for other wanderers, and lighted up a chain of posts to show the way. The movement, commenced in reaction from inadequate metaphysics, never rested till it found the legitimate repose of a satisfying theology. In naming the accomplished Chaplain of Lincoln's Inn as the most distinguished representative of this type of religious thought, we do not overlook the marked individuality which assigns to him a place of his own. But this very freedom and freshness in the disciple will be found characteristic, as of Plato's so of Coleridge's disciples. Mr. Maurice may well protest against the absurd classification which, under the common designation of "Broad Church," ranks him in the same series with Whately, Powell, and Williams,—men whose first principles and whole method are the most precise contradictories of his own, however congenial with him they may be in resistance to unchristian narrowness and unworthy fears. But he has always affectionately claimed his affinity with the author of the *Aids to Reflection*, and cannot be displeased if we seek him, with Julius Hare, in the parlour of the Highgate sage. In the *philosophical* reaction proceeding thence to penetrate the whole substance of Christianity, we find the *second* element in the modern development.

It would be a curious problem of literary geography to trace the stream of French intellectual influence which has passed through Edinburgh, to effect its infiltration into the English mind. Certain it is that the action of continental culture on North Britain has been more immediate and conspicuous than on South; and in return, the writings of the "Scottish school" have met with a recognition in Paris and Geneva which they never obtained in England. The genius of the country inclines, on one side, to the Gallican type of Reformed theology; on the other, to the material sciences in which Paris, on the whole, has borne the palm. Playfair, Leslie, and Dugald Stewart, in their mathematical and physical expositions, have the peculiar impress of French neatness and precision. David Hume, scarcely

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English in his style, was still less so in the easy play of his logic, and the careless completeness of his Pyrrhonism. And the answers which his own countrymen gave to him were precisely such as the metaphysical orthodoxy of the *Faculté des Lettres* approved and reproduced. Again and again may be noticed a certain sympathetic or concurrent change in the speculative temperature of Edinburgh and Paris. During the depression of France after the Restoration, the reaction against the opinions and tastes of her revolutionary period was every where strong in Europe; and met in Edinburgh with no check from any fascinating system or powerful mind. The phrenology of Gall, the criticism of Jeffrey, the rhetoric of Brown, could not assuage the deeper thirst now beginning to be felt. Something else was needed than a new form of the discarded materialism, and freethinking, and sensationalism of the last age. In truth, Scottish logic and metaphysics had run dry, and by resort to them was no baptism of regeneration to be found. While many still wandered there in hope, there came out of the desert a Scottish *vates*, who had descried an unexhausted spring, and led the way to it by strange paths. Thomas Carlyle gave the first clear expression to the struggling heart of a desolate yet aspiring time, making a clean breast of many stifled unbeliefs and noble hatreds; and if unable to find any certain Saviour for the present, at least preparing some love and reverence to sit, "clothed and in right mind," for the Divine welcome, whenever it might come. Is the reader surprised that we keep a niche for the author of *Hero-Worship* in our gallery of *theologians?* Be it so. The officials of St. Stephen's were also surprised at the proposal to put Cromwell's effigy among the statues of the kings. We will only say, that whoever doubts the vast influence of Carlyle's writings on the inmost faith of our generation, or supposes that influence to be wholly disorganising, misinterprets, in our opinion, the symptoms of the time, and is blinded by current phraseology to essential facts. With this conviction, we must treat the *literary* reaction represented by him as the *third* element, completing the modern development.

To these three movements, distinguished by the names of Newman, Coleridge, and Carlyle, must be mainly ascribed the altered spirit, in regard to religion, pervading the young intellect of England. In proceeding to notice them one by one, we must be content with a slight glance at their most salient features. And we must wholly pass by many secondary, though far from unimportant, streams of separate influence which have swelled the confluence of change. The operation of Arnold's life,—of Whately's writings,—of Channing,—of the younger Newman,—of Theodore Parker,—of Emerson,—on the temper and belief of

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the age, has in each case been considerable. But we limit ourselves to the *prophetæ majores*. Moreover, it is only on the *fresh powers*, cutting into original directions, and making roadways of thought where before was the forest or the flood, that we propose to dwell. Whilst these have been working their way, of course the old tendencies have not quitted the field, or lost their hold. The elder orthodoxies, the elder scepticisms, of established type, are still alive; and now and then, during the last thirty years, have put forth startling reassertions of their vitality. In Comte the physical, in Strauss the historical, negation of theology, may be said not only to reappear, but to culminate. And each of these, again, has its group of related phenomena: the Logic of Mill, the hypothesis of the *Vestiges* (and, we would add, the greater part of the replies), the Psychology of Herbert Spencer, and the propaganda of Secularism, tracing the course of the Positivist tendency; while the freer hand which scriptural criticism every where displays, its more open feeling for the *human* element in the gospel,—qualities which, most conspicuous abroad, are yet familiar to us in Bunsen, Stanley, and Jowett,—indicate a direction from which the *Leben Jesu* has rendered it impossible to recede. These, however, are but the newest steps on beaten tracks of thought. Since the age of Bacon (nay, for that matter, from the days of Socrates), we have known that to seek only natural law, was the way to find only natural law; and since the time of Semler, there is no excuse for surprise if the critique of Scripture persists in demanding some modification of our faith. To lay down the true bridge from inductive science to the living God,—to settle the relation between the human and the divine factors in the process and monuments of revelation,—these are not new difficulties; nor is it an original device to fall into despair at them, and declare that the problems can be worked only on their finite side. Comte and Strauss, therefore, we disregard, at present, as mere *continuance-phenomena*,—rather clenching the past than opening the future. They do but modify the equilibrium of given conditions: and our purpose is to describe the dynamic elements which have introduced unexpected movement.

The marvellous results of the High-Church reaction have nearly effaced the remembrance of its local and personal beginnings. It was busy at Oxford long before the first "Tracts" appeared; under an aspect, however, which gave little promise of the *Newman-ia* (to borrow a witticism of Whately's) afterwards developed. Some thirteen years before the Tracts were advertised, two undergraduates had an epistolary controversy together on the subject of *baptismal regeneration*; and the correspondent who took the *evangelical* side was John Henry New-

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man. The doctrine, therefore, was in vogue ere its appointed advocate was converted. In truth, Dr. Charles Lloyd, who filled the chair of Divinity (Regius) from 1822, and the see of Oxford from 1827 till his death in 1829, was, throughout this period, obnoxious to the Evangelicals as the avowed representative of an opposite school, to which also Hawkins, Pusey, and Keble belonged. But the "Catholic" tendency of this group of friends was marked by other symptoms than the later Tractarian. Dr. Newman has remarked, that "the same philosophical elements" will "lead one mind to the Church of Rome; another to what, for want of a better word, may be called *Germanism*."* He is pleased to add, that the determination towards the Tiber or the Rhine will depend on the person's "sensibility or insensibility to sin." Perhaps, also, a little on his knowledge or ignorance of the German language and literature; without some access to which, "*Germanism*" would seem to be impossible, and therefore, in the given case, Romanism inevitable. The *Præ-Newmanites* at Oxford were not unfurnished with modern, in addition to ancient, scholarship; and, accordingly, were known to look with hope and favour on the aims of a scientific theology, and to be quite above the conventional disparagement of German research to which a blind cowardice resorts. Indeed, Dr. Pusey's first publication, dedicated to Bishop Lloyd, was a defence† of the "Theology of Germany" against the strictures of Mr. Rose in his *Cambridge University Sermons*. This little book, which, we believe, has long been suppressed, bears curious witness to the deflection of the Oxford movement from its original path. The author explains the extravagancies of Rationalism by the absurd "stiffness" and intolerable "orthodoxism" which preceded and provoked them: he welcomes the aid of Kant and Schelling in transition to a higher faith: he treats the dangerous crisis as over, and the healthy renovation of theology as in progress. Nor are his particular judgments of men and books less remarkable than the general course of his argument. Of Lessing he speaks (p. 51) with warm affection, as "probably *more Christian*," despite his scepticism, than his orthodox opponent Göze; and (p. 156) as, "perhaps rightly, preferring Pantheism to the then existing systems." He recognises (p. 177) De Wette's "really Christian faith," obscured though it might be by adherence to the philosophy of Fries. Schleiermacher receives (p. 115) the highest praise. Bretschneider is justified (p. 154) for attempting, in the *Probabilia*, to bring the Johan-

* Essay on the Development of Christian Doctrine, p. 71.

† An Historical Inquiry into the probable Causes of the Rationalist Character lately predominant in the Theology of Germany. By E. B. Pusey, M.A., Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. 1828.

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nine question to an issue. And it is strange to hear (p. 80) from the nominal father of "Puseyism," that the "*gratia ministerialis*,"—the efficacy of the sacraments and offices, though administered by evil men,—is "an absurd and pernicious fiction." That a book abounding in such estimates should be laid by this particular author at the feet of an Oxford bishop and Regius Professor; and that the successors to that divinity chair should be first Dr. Burton and then Dr. Hampden, are clear indications of a theological tendency, present and powerful in the early years of the anti-evangelical movement, but superseded and discharged at a later stage.

In 1829, Bishop Lloyd made his mortal exit. Superfluous German and defective "sensibility to sin" having thus withdrawn to other scenes, there was room for "the same philosophical elements," with proper "sensibility" and no German, to enter from the other side, and, slipping to the front, lead on whither that happy set of graces tends. For a while it seemed doubtful which of the two paths the Oxford High Church was to take—Germanism or Romanism—theological advance or ecclesiastical retrogression: and the events of that year curiously show how little either section of the party understood its own instincts and could take its proper attitude. It was the memorable year of Catholic emancipation and Sir Robert Peel's rejection at Oxford. At that election we find Dr. Pusey among the strenuous supporters, Dr. Newman among the vehement opponents, of the minister and his Relief-bill: the former reputed to be "one of the most liberal members of the University," the latter in close "union with the most violent bigots" of "the No-popery party;"* the future Anglican in the camp of the liberals—the future Romanist in that of the Orangemen! Yet Newman had already betrayed the tendencies which ere long possessed him entirely, and become separated by them from his former associates of the same school. Not only had his private opinions opened out, from 1823-6, into something like "full-blown Popery,"† but he had evinced on their behalf that unrivalled power of personal influence which few sensitive minds can resist, and which carries with it a restless passion for its own exercise. He was, indeed, foiled in his first conflict with the Evangelical party, and in his first attempt to dictate a policy to his own; but his was not a power which depended on external success; it was a spiritual ascendency, yielding like the air to local strokes of force, but remaining circumambient and elastic still. The minute-book of the Oxford Auxiliary Bible Society probably records the earliest public evidence of his alienation from his undergraduate faith.

* Life of Blanco White, vol. iii. p. 131.

† See F. W. Newman's Phases of Faith, p. 11.

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Already remarkable for the force and fervour of his preaching, and not yet an object of theological suspicion, he had been appointed third secretary to the society in 1826, on the suggestion of Dr. Symons (present Warden of Wadham College), and with the approval of Dr. M'Bride (now Principal of Magdalen Hall), and other distinguished supporters of the Low Church. No sooner had he accepted the office than an anonymous circular appeared on the breakfast-table of sundry clergymen of the place, lamenting that the society was in the hands of the low party; urging the importance of effecting a change, and pointing out a rule which conferred a vote on every clerical subscription of half-a-guinea. It was soon whispered that this paper was not unknown to the new secretary; though one at least of his near friends felt secure in denying his connection with it, and was proportionately disturbed to find it really his production. The design, thus commenced in secret, soon threw off all disguise. The draft of the annual report, drawn up in the usual unctuous style by the first secretary, Mr. Hill (Vice-Principal of St. Edmund's Hall), came before the committee for discussion. The new secretary moved some two hundred and fifty amendments, which would have struck out all the Scripture adaptations and "gracious" jargon from the document, and turned it into such English as he might use. He lost his amendments,—his office,—and all further confidence from the Evangelical party.

The loss, however, of his tutorship in Oriel, involving as it did a breach with Dr. Hawkins (the Provost), was more significant in relation to the subsequent course of Anglicanism. In conjunction with two out of three co-tutors (the elder Froude and Mr. [afterwards Archdeacon] Robert Isaac Wilberforce), he had requested that the Oriel men might be distributed into four separate sets; and that of these, one might be assigned to each tutor as his *pastoral charge*. The request was refused by the Provost, on the reasonable ground that, by the proposed arrangement, the students would fall, in each case, under the exclusive power of one man's mind, instead of experiencing, as was intended, the influence of the whole tutorial body. The disappointed petitioners resigned; and from that moment the preacher at St. Mary's, checked in his operations *within* his college, laid himself out for religious action *beyond* its walls, and raised his Church and Littlemore into a power of the first order in the history of English religion.

The death of Dr. Lloyd removed his chief external check at a time when his internal resources for influence were fast maturing. The Divinity chair and the episcopal office were no longer united; and scientific theology lost the shelter of the mitre. The subtle intellect and resolute will of John Henry Newman

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were left without a rival: not indisposed to crush as dangerous the explorations of German criticism, which probably suggested nothing but scepticisms to his outside gaze; and impelled to organise, out of the safer materials of patristic and ecclesiastical literature, where he was at home, a scheme of doctrine with clear passages between the parts, with commodious stowing-place for every doubt, and foundations buried out of sight. We presume it must be ascribed to the influence of his friend, that Dr. Pusey never followed up the direction on which he had so well entered in his "Inquiry" concerning Rationalism; and that a few years later (in 1836) he was ready, in his turn, to employ against Dr. Hampden the very same unworthy weapons which he had wrested from the hand of Mr. Rose. When *he* had succumbed, all ambiguity as to the course of the movement ceased. The assault on Evangelicism from the side of free learning was silent; the guns spiked, the batteries abandoned. All was to be done from the entrenched positions of Past Authority, and the communications surrendered with the open road of Future Truth. Though some cautious years had still to pass ere the full bearings of the new system were displayed, the absence of divided command accelerated its development, and simplify its history. The preacher of St. Mary's was undisputed *choregus:* and the analysis of his personal theology preserves the essence of the whole reaction.

Whence arises that strange mixture of admiration and of distrust, of which most readers and hearers of John Henry Newman are conscious? Often as he carries us away by his close dialectic, his wonderful readings of the human heart, his tender or indignant fervour, there remains a small dark speck of misgiving which we can never wipe out. The secret perhaps lies in this,—that his own faith is an escape from an alternative scepticism, which receives the *veto* not of his reason, but of his will. He has, after all, the critical, not the prophetic mind. He wants *immediateness* of religious vision. Instead of finding his eye clearer and his foot firmer the deeper he sinks towards the ultimate ground of trust, he hints that the light is precarious, and that your step may chance on the water or the rock in that abysmal realm. The tendency of the purest religious insight is ever to quit superficial and derivative beliefs, and seek the primitive roots where the finite draws life from the Infinite. The awfulness of that position, the direct contact of the human spirit with the Divine, the loneliness of communion when all media of church and usage are removed, do not appal the piety of noblest mood. With Dr. Newman the order is reversed. He loves to work in the upper strata of the minds with which he deals, detecting their inconsistencies, balancing their wants, satisfying them with the mere coherence and relative sufficiency of their

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belief, but encouraging them to shrink from the last questionings. With himself, indeed, he sometimes goes deeper, and descends towards the bases of all devout belief; but evidently with less of assurance as his steps pass down. The ground feels to him less and less solid as he penetrates from the deposits of recent experience into the inner laboratory of the world; and it is only when he stands upon the crust, and takes it as it is, that he loses the fear lest it rest upon the flood. His certainties are on the surface, and his insecurities below. With men of opposite character, often reputed to be sceptical, doubt is at the top, and is but as the swaying of water that is calm below, and sleeps in its entire mass within its granite cradle. He seems to say within himself, "There *is* no bottom to these things that I can find; we must therefore *put one there;* and only mind that it be sufficient to hold them in, supposing it to be real." He deals, in short, with the first truths of religion as *hypotheses*, not known or knowable in themselves, but recommended by the sufficient account they give of the facts, and the practical fitness of belief in them to our nature. He denies the existence for our mind of any thing *ἀνυπόθετον*, and treats even our highest persuasions as a provisional discipline, wholesome for us to retain, whether they be harmless errors or eternal truths. Nor is this radical scepticism merely implied at second-hand: it receives direct and repeated statement as a philosophical principle. In his History of the Arians,* the author explains the distinction drawn by the Fathers between *θεολογία* and *οἰκονομία*, between absolute and relative truth in regard to God. An "economy," we are told, is a representation not corresponding with the real nature of things, but reduced into adaptation to our faculties, and substituted for the truth in condescension to our incapacity. It is not simply the broken view which alone *we* can seize of transcendent realities, given for apprehension but not yet apprehended; it is a "pious fraud,"—a benevolent cheat,—directly put upon us by the Creator himself, to stand as the moral equivalent of a missing verity. Now, what does the author include under this class of representative illusions? Does he, like the Fathers, confine the application to the doctrine of the Incarnation and historical manifestation of God in Christ, as opposed to his inner and Absolute Essence? Far from it. He reduces to the same head the revelation to us of *moral laws;* and the suggestion, by sensible phenomena, of an *external material world;* and the aspect of *design and purpose* which the cosmical order assumes in the eyes of "the multitude." Are these things, then,—these porphyry pillars on which our very life is raised,—nothing but

* Pp. 43, 44.

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appearance,—"shadows," "beguiling the imaginations of most men with a harmless but unfounded belief"? So does our author regard them: and in his idealism saves nothing whatever, so far as we can find, from the realm of fantasy. Alike in the world of sense and in the temple of the spirit "man walketh in a vain show." In this way the very antithesis from which he starts disappears: he gives such an extension to the system of *economy* as to swallow up the *theology* altogether, and to present God to us as never and nowhere doing any thing but "simulating" on our behalf. Not only are we kept at a distance from all realities; but the representations amid which our minds are imprisoned are, or may be, *false* representations;—false in the same way and degree as the assertion that the Mosaic dispensation was unchangeable, though all the while it was destined to be abolished. Alas! have we here no key to our author's fondness for an esoteric and exoteric presentation of doctrine?—for a mystical as well as a literal exegesis?—for a *disciplina arcani?*—for *doubling* the aspect and expression of all that is offered as truth? If the universe and God set the example of being scenical, what shall hinder religion from becoming histrionic?

The hypothetical nature of even the most fundamental propositions in theology,—their dependence on assumptions which not our vision but our blindness compels us to make,—is strongly asserted in the following paragraph of the fourteenth University Sermon; on the Theory of Developments in religious doctrine:

"It is true that God is without beginning, *if* eternity may worthily be considered to imply succession; in every place, *if* He who is a Spirit can have relations with space. It is right to speak of His Being and Attributes, *if* He be not rather super-essential; it is true to say that He is wise or powerful, *if* we may consider Him as other than the most simple Unity. He is truly Three, *if* He is truly One; He is truly One, *if* the idea of Him falls under earthly number. He has a triple Personality in the sense in which the Infinite can be understood to have Personality at all. *If* we know any thing of Him,—*if* we may speak of Him in any way,—*if* we may emerge from Atheism or Pantheism into religious faith,—*if* we would have any saving hope, any life of truth and holiness within us,—this only do we know, with this only confession we must begin and end our worship,—that the Father is the One God, the Son the One God, and the Holy Ghost the One God; and that the Father is not the Son, the Son not the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost not the Father." (p. 353.)

To a faith thus contingent on certain prior assumptions there could be no valid objection, *if* the assumptions themselves are regarded as unconditionally sure. But the fatal thing is this, that every one of them is regarded by the author as an "economy"—as referable not to our knowledge but to our nescience—as rather

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a πρῶτον ψεῦδος than a genuine "first truth." Reason would as soon suspect as trust them;—nay, it is reason that traces them to their seat in our feebleness and incapacity, and enables us to put the case of their being false. If, in a fit of caprice, you choose to throw them all away and substitute their opposites, no one can show rational cause against you, or dispute the philosophical adequacy of your new hypothesis. *Both* doctrines, atheism and theism, our author more than once intimates, are theories that will hold water. "It is indeed," he says, "a great question whether atheism is not as philosophically consistent with the phenomena of the physical world, taken by themselves, as the doctrine of a creative and governing Power."* In preferring the religious interpretation of the universe, we seize an hypothesis at a venture, impelled by the presumptions of a good heart.

On every account we object to this statement of the ultimate grounds of religion. The author concedes far too much to the atheistic doctrine; and by treating it as an *hypothesis* puts it to a wrong test: for the question is, not whether its premisses, *if true*, will cover the phenomena; but whether its premisses (*e. g.* its notions of Force, Causation, Law) *are true*, or, on the contrary, confused and self-contradictory. He establishes a false variance between the rational and the moral faculties of the soul, and in consequence between philosophical and religious evidence; so that we are made to lose a truth by the one and then recover it by the other. Speculative Reason sends us to the Gazette, but Practical Reason steps in with copious assets and discharges every claim. We dislike to be made the sport of these experiments between imaginary rivals: we object to being drowned in the sea of speculation, just that the Humane Society of practical principles may rub us into life again. The intellectual and the moral functions of our nature have one and the same inspiration,—gain their vision by one and the same light; and it is only by a trick of artificial abstraction that faith can be said to suffer ruin from the one and receive rescue by the other. The postulates of morals stand, in their own right, as first principles in philosophy. But the essential fault of our author's foundation lies in his *Idealism*. That the existence and perfection of God,—that the conflict of moral law with lower nature,—should be no more certain than the reality of an outward world, we may contentedly allow, *provided* that outward world be left to us as an immediate object, positively given to our knowledge by a veracious faculty. This, however, is precisely what Dr. Newman refuses to us. He treats the notion of a material universe as an "unfounded belief," neutral at best as to truth or falsehood. Our moral faith, our

* University Sermons, chiefly on the Theory of Religious Belief, p. 186.

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religious faith, he sets on the same footing with our natural realism; and then slips that realism away as a harmless beguilement, "simulating" yet masking the inaccessible fact.* The logical consequence is evident—is probably *meant* to be evident; for sceptical desolation is found to be the best preparative for the shelter of an authoritative church.

The relation of faith to reason is traced by Dr. Newman with a fineness and general truth of discrimination that remind us of Butler.† He rejects the rationalist conceptions of faith, as either the purely intellectual act of believing on testimonial and other secondary evidence, or the purely moral act of carrying out by the will what has been accepted by the understanding. The former confounds it with opinion; the latter with obedience. He does not narrow the term to the Lutheran dimensions, to denote a reliant affection towards a person, and imply a grace peculiar to the Christian and Jewish dispensations. It is a *moral act of reason*, believing, at the instigation of reverence and love, something which goes beyond the severe requirements of the evidence. In matters of pure science, where we have to do with mere nature, the mind simply follows the vestiges of proof. But in concerns of man and God we necessarily carry into every process of judgment antecedent presumptions which colour our whole thought, and interpret for us the external signs given to direct us. To a cold intellect these presumptions will be wanting; and it will construe the spiritual as if it were physical. To a bad heart they will be dark suspicions; and it will believe its own shadow. To an affectionate, faithful, humble mind they will be clear trusts; and it will "think no evil," and "hope all things." It is in this yielding of the reason to the better suggestion—this casting of one's lot with the higher possibility, that faith consists. Obedience to conscience partakes therefore of the nature of faith;‡ and implies, wherever found, a seed of grace and an offer of salvation. The great heathen world is thus brought within the compass of a divine probation; and faithful men, true to their gifts and guidance, are scattered through all lands and ages. It is characteristic of the judgments of faith, that they are immediate and intuitive, detached and unsystematic; whilst those of wisdom are mediate and reflective—the explicit and connected contents of implicit acts of trust. Wisdom is therefore the end of that Christian culture of which faith is the beginning,§ the ἐπιστήμη of morals, as opposed to mere ἀληθὴς δόξα. It springs from the exercise of Reason on the data of Faith. The same Reason, exercised on the data of Sense and Perception, constitutes

* Arians of the Fourth Century, pp. 44, 45. University Sermons, p. 350.
† See especially University Sermons, IX. X. XI. Essay on Development, ch. vi. § 2.
‡ University Sermons, II. pp. 19 et seqq. § Ibid. XIII. p. 283.

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the scientific intellect; whose scrutiny, thus working *in alio genere*, can never alight upon moral discoveries, or replace what has been let slip through non-acceptance of the presumptions of Conscience. Here lies the great mistake of Protestants, who begin with inquiry, expecting to end with faith—"grapes from thorns, and figs from thistles." Catholics, on the other hand, begin with faith, and develop it by inquiry;* reverently taking the divine instincts, and drawing out their hidden oracles into the symmetry of a holy philosophy. In this view the very materials of religious knowledge are present only to the tact of a pure heart; and our author is quite self-consistent when he affirms, in language curiously coinciding with his brother's, that the moral sense—the "spiritual discernment"—is the legitimate judge of religious truth; the intellect having only to prepare the case and watch it with negative and corrective function.†

In its broad features; its linking of moral with religious reverence; its separation of conscience from understanding; its distinction between implicit and explicit truth,—this theory of faith contrasts favourably both with the evangelical no-theory and the rationalist wrong theory. Did the author never quit its systematic statement, or, in quitting it for concrete application, never transgress its terms, we should thank him for removing old errors without remonstrance for introducing new. When, however, we turn from his disquisitions to his tales, and observe the use to which he puts his doctrine in practical life, we start back in dismay, and ask ourselves whether what we had so much approved in thought can issue in what we must utterly disapprove in action? In the sermons we seem to understand the statements, and with full heart assent to them that "faith must *venture something*;" that in order to finish by knowing, you must commence by trusting; that self-surrender in the dark to conscience clears up into open-eyed wisdom. Nor should we seriously object to the exhortation, "*Believe* first, and *conviction* will follow," so long as we may construe the "belief" to mean simple reliance on *instinctive* impressions of the good and true, and the "conviction," a reflective apprehension of their *ground*; and may therefore read the lesson thus: "You must *do* the right before you can *know* it." First, however, an uneasy wonder stops us when we are told that in early times men became Christians, not *because* they believed, but *in order to believe*;‡ and that the characteristic doctrines of the Gospel were not offered to them till after they had bound themselves to the church by baptism. Next, the real meaning of these ill-favoured general statements becomes shamefully apparent in a particular instance in *Loss and Gain*, where

* Loss and Gain, p. 103. † University Sermons, III. pp. 40, 44, 45.
‡ Arians, p. 78. Loss and Gain, p. 343.

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the hero, a puzzled Protestant, unsatisfied with English church-parties, but an entire stranger to the Romanist system and worship, is passionately urged by a recently "perverted" friend to take his hat and walk straight away into confession and adoption. He does not at the moment yield to the advice; but a little later he follows it, without any great advance in his mental preparation, and before ever witnessing a service in a Catholic church. Thus is the word "*faith*" degraded to the sense of "trying the experiment of an unknown religion, and obeying it at hazard;" and has no further reference to *conscience*, which stands quite neutral towards a church not yet appreciated. There is still, however, a lower step to be taken. Dr. Newman does not attempt to disguise the shock given to the moral feeling and taste of newcomers by many things inseparable from Romanism. How does he counsel them to deal with their distress? To respect it as a sacred sign? to follow their own highest perception at all risks? No; but to suppress and smother it; to consider that they must not expect to get through without dirt, and to hope that things will look cleaner when the eye has become used to them. And this, *proh pudor!* he also calls "faith;" having at last turned it right round, and brought it to mean the *contradiction* of conscience,—the placid swallowing of what is offensive to the moral sense. In short, he makes it convertible with mere "*taking on trust*," without regard to the felt *quality* of the thing taken. Whether you yield to what commands, or to what scandalises, your natural reverence, you equally satisfy the conditions of our author's "*faith*." The word thus becomes an engine that will work either in advance or in reverse: whether you believe your conscience or disbelieve, it keeps you on the pious track.

The practice of professing a creed "*in order to believe*" has long been a favourite with the casuistry of Oxford. Arnold, troubled with doubts about the doctrine of the Trinity, was recommended by his friend Keble to take a parish, and avow the doctrine several times per week, and multiply the meshes of his entanglement with it. Every Oxford tutor, we believe, could quote instances in which scepticism of greater extent has been met with similar advice. Without discussing the pleas advanced in defence of such counsels, we will test their character by an imaginary case, exhibiting the conditions in the simplest form. In a religious and highly accomplished family, connected on all hands with the church, an erring son, let us suppose, becomes enamoured of the "doctrine of circumstances;" and passing through the mere fatalistic stage, settles into resolute and open-eyed atheism. No nobleness of character or confusion of thought beguiles him (as happier natures are beguiled) into the illusion that moral distinctions remain when divine realities are gone:

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and his life exhibits no violent inconsistency with a creed which disclaims responsibility. Among his numerous clerical connections, one, we will suppose, is captivated with the new formula, that men are to become members of the church not "because they believe, but in order to believe:" and, acting on this rule, addresses him to the following effect: "You say you disbelieve the existence of a God; but you are in no condition to judge, for you have never tried the hypothesis of theism. Your first step must be to grant it for experiment's sake, to act *as if* there were a God, and become a *quasi*-Christian. Join the church; diligently profess the creeds; take the sacrament; be constant in your prayers; expostulate with the heresies of others; and in due time *belief will follow*." It is easier, perhaps, to conceive such counsels offered than to imagine them accepted. For completeness' sake, however, let us suppose their influence for the moment to prevail. A sudden transformation is visible. The atheist looks up his prayer-book, and is seen twice a day at church: he audibly says, "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, &c.;" he bows to the cast at the name of the Lord Jesus Christ; he hears the warning from the altar to "search his own conscience" "*not* after the manner of *dissemblers with God*," and answers it by boldly partaking at "the holy table." He plays the Pharisee towards pure and pious friends, needing his rebuke for their "neological" tendencies. His fictitious zeal at last outstrips the pace of his spiritual counsellor; to whom he points out certain worldly-minded friends as requiring to be brought to a "sense of their condition." The clergyman declining so delicate an office, the spell of his influence is broken; his hopeful novice throws up with disgust "the hypothesis of a God," relapses into the atheism which had never really left him for an hour: and "Richard is himself again."

That we have not misconceived the natural issue of this sort of experiment, critics of human nature will perhaps allow. That the experiment itself is a legitimate offspring of the parent maxim, the logical reader will hardly question. But between logic and life, it will be said, bridges are scarce; and, in practice, these extreme cases never find the means to cross. Those who speak thus can have had little access to the inner history of the present age. When the time comes for its sincerest biographies to appear, the truth will often prove "stranger than our fiction."

The theory of Christianity which Dr. Newman's writings present deserved better at his hands than to be given as an hypothesis and an "economy." Stript of perverse adjuncts, and checked at its points of deflection, it assumes the aspect of a religious philosophy, combining, with an unusual sense of proportion, the chief truths of Christian morals and faith. In its

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results it concurs, of course, with the Catholic doctrines; but it brings them out in fresh connections and with reference all round to the rival teachings, from the midst of which the expositor himself has emerged into them. The briefest notice of the main features must content us.

The human soul cannot lose its essentially moral constitution. Free and responsible still in the heathen notwithstanding the fall, and in the Christian though brought under grace, it has never sunk below the capacity, and never rises above the obligation, of obedience. The sense of duty is intrinsically the highest authority,—the ultimate ground of all ecclesiastical pretensions. The "objective authority" of the church, which is peculiar to revealed religion, would have nothing to rest upon, were it not for the prior "subjective authority" of conscience, which belongs to natural religion. The dispensations of God are not, therefore, restricted to the Hebrew course of history: they are universal as the human conscience, and every man has his trust of light and grace. Even special revelation must be regarded as probably given at different times to all nations; no tribe being without traditions of supernatural events. The distinction in favour of the Jewish race is simply that with it alone have the facts been preserved by authentic records and media. And as the inspiration of God is not restricted by limits of place, so neither does it die out with time. He speaks to us still, and enables us to add to our store; not, indeed, by taking any new point of departure, but developing and applying the divine data,—by resolving the vision and concrete thought of the Son of God into the component ideas and living truths which it yields to holy reflection.

In its very nature religious truth is *self*-evidencing,—evolved from the mind rather than deposited on it: and the care of the teacher or the church must be directed less to any intellectual elaboration of proof than to prepare the temper and posture of the receiving soul, and waken into consciousness the elementary experiences of reverence and faith. Christianity itself is self-evidencing, and by its inherent power makes way where no books of evidences could carry it. Indeed, *all* its doctrines are really given, and have actually been found, in natural religion. Only they came to wise and good heathens on the vague authority of a divine *principle*, instead of a divine *agent*. The one grand gift of the Gospel to the human mind is that, by the Incarnation, it has determined the *personality* of God, and His relations of *character and affection* towards man. *This*, and not what is called the "doctrine of the Cross," is the specialty and living kernel of the Gospel.

Christianity, however, is not adequately described as a revelation of truth; or even as a saving transaction: rather is it (in-

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clusively, indeed, of these) a divine Institute in perpetuity for helping man to "cleanse himself from sin." His fallen nature, though not ruined or bereft of its free-will, is in a state of moral infirmity, requiring supernatural aids; and these the Christian economy provides. First, the Son of God became incarnate, "*non amittendo quod erat, sed sumendo quod non erat*," reconciling infinitude with personality, and purifying the nature He adopted and through whose experiences He passed. Next, the sacrificial merits of this act are distributed by a perpetual re-incarnation in the Eucharist, and, with modifications, by the other sacraments, as vehicles of grace. But again, the spiritual purification which is thus freely given to faith for *past* evil does not close the contingencies of the *future*. Only in proportion as the grace of faith leads to works and love, is it effectual for the time to come: so that the retrospect on Redemption does not close the prospect of Retribution, and within the Gospel there is still a Law. Baptism, which washes out all prior sin, cannot be repeated: and subsequent transgressions must be cleansed away either by the penances and absolution of the church, or by the expiations of purgatory. Throughout his doctrine our author provides a responsible place for the human will, and constructs a true "*moral* theology." His antithesis between grace and nature shows itself, not by opposing faith to morality, but by importing into morals an interior contrast between the tastes of the natural and of the religious conscience; the latter going beyond the mere human rectitudes, and producing ascetic virtues,—regarding life as penitential and expiatory, if not endowed with positive and blessed promise to self-sacrifice.

On the mere Romanist appendages to this scheme,—the Invocation of saints, the Mariolatry, the Apostolic Succession, &c. —we mean to say nothing. They are chiefly remarkable for having raised up in their defence the obnoxious but highly important "doctrine of development." In the absence of any plausible support from Scripture, it became necessary, if they were to be retained at all, to widen the source of doctrine, and give an interpreting and determining power to the church. In order to reconcile Protestants to this, it was maintained that for them too, not less than for the Catholics, the letter of the Bible was insufficient, unless read by the reflected light of later ecclesiastical decisions. Neither the doctrine of the Trinity, nor the usage of Infant Baptism, could be gathered from the sacred writings alone. Such questions as those respecting an intermediate state and the remission of past-baptismal sins are raised, but not solved, by the Gospels. Nor can Scripture determine its own canon, or its own inspiration. To set it up as a self-sufficing objective authority, is to apply it to a purpose for which it is not intended or adapted.

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On the other hand, traces abound upon its page that it has been composed on the principle of development, that is, with a view to an ulterior determination of many things which it leaves indeterminate. The statement of the Logos-doctrine in the proem of St. John's Gospel is but the germ in which the true doctrine of Christ's higher nature lies: and till successive heresies had started the questions dormant within it, and given occasion for a verdict on them, the right solution could not disengage itself from the possible wrong ones. The prophecies quoted from the Jewish Scriptures in the Christian seem inapplicable, till we are furnished with the double meaning or non-natural sense; and to bring this fully out required the experience of a later time, when the necessary tendency of literal and historical interpretation to Arian rationalism had been made evident in the exegetical school of Antioch, and the connection of the mystical method with orthodoxy and piety had displayed itself in the catechetical school of Alexandria. From all these symptoms it is gathered, that the Christian system, not excepting its primary principles, is only implicitly given in the canonical books; that the seed of truth, once consigned to human souls as its receptacle, more and more clearly evinced its nature and discriminated its species by the growths into which it opened; that the tact of the church in recognising the genuine characters, and in rejecting the spurious or mixed, became finer with continued exercise, and the aid of prior definitions; that instead of testing the later by the earlier, we are to interpret the earlier by the later, and import the explicit doctrines of the fourth and fifth centuries into the rudimentary expressions of the first. Protestants must either denude their creed to its mere embryo, or let it assume the proportions of full-blown Romanism.

The state of this controversy is curious. The assumption on both sides is, that *either* the Bible or the Church is impregnable, and achieves all our protection from error for us: the only question is, *which* of the two it is. To put this to the test, each party tries to discredit the favourite refuge of the other. Dr. Newman does not scruple to discharge a volley into the intrenchment of Scripture, in order to show the Protestants that it may be made too hot to hold them, and "compel them to come in" to his stronghold. They reply by a hot fire at his church-bastions, to convince him that they may be knocked about his head. Is it surprising if both are pretty well riddled; if neither is found to be designed for the purpose to which it has been applied; and if a change of the whole ground should be the clearly indicated result? By *no* documentary process, no construction of title-deeds, be they canonical or ecclesiastical, of the first century or the fourth, can you draw forth the oracular system which you

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seek. Rail off what plot of history you will, the human, with all its liabilities, will be there. Wander where you will on its unenclosed spaces, the divine, with its eternal teaching, will not be absent. For discriminating the true from the false, the accidental from the essential, in morals and religion, whether drawn from the special Christian data, or from the entire life of humanity, something more is needed than to draw an arbitrary line round a select group of books, or a favoured series of centuries. "Objective authority" in religion there doubtless is; but vested in a Person who is eternal, and not therefore a fixture of chronology; speaking to us through *all* the media of His life in humanity, and not therefore separable from the "subjective authority" of conscience, or discoverable without it; and though uniquely manifested in the "Word made flesh," yet owned by us even there only through the same Word in hearts already tinctured with the Christian consciousness.

Looking back on the whole influence of Dr. Newman's personality and writings, we see in it a great preponderance of good. Bishop Thirlwall has justly acknowledged that the Oxford movement has given rise to more valuable writings in theology than had appeared for a long time previous to it. And though it arrested the pursuit of critical theology for a while, the postponement was amply compensated by a newly-awakened attention to the whole history of Christianity, and a far more searching look into the moral and spiritual conditions and effects of faith in the human soul. The prosecution of the critical theology will be resumed with larger, humbler, yet freer spirit, now that some deeper root has been found for Christian obedience and belief than an authority wholly external and contingent on a literary tenure. A sense of the universality and perpetuity of Divine grace,—of the sanctity of common duties and self-denials,—of the grandeur and power of historical communion and church-life,—of the true place of beauty and art in worship,—has deeply penetrated into the newer religion of England;—chiefly, it is true, among the classes within reach of academical modes of thought and feeling, but through them affecting the administration of parishes and manors out of number. For the reunion of religious and moral ends,—for the reconciliation of human admirations with holy reverence,—for the consecration of the near and temporal,—many a heart owes a debt of unspeakable gratitude to the literature of the Oxford school. The one grand sin which we must set off against these merits, is a certain want of unconditional and ultimate trust in their own principles. Their system has too often the appearance of being constructed on purpose as a refuge from doubts they dare not face. Their intellectual men have been fond of playing with fire, and flinging

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about brilliant scepticisms, eating into the very heart of life, for the chance of inducing flight into their protecting fold. It is hard for a proselyte of terror to become a child of trust: and the brand of *fear* deforms the forehead of this party. "To obey," they say, "is easier than to believe: so we will begin from the conscience, that we may end with assurance." Good: but see that you obey out of the belief you *have*, instead of *with a view to a belief which you have not*. Conscience has a right to you through and through, and must be served without terms: and vainly do you mount her sacred steps on knees of painful penance, if the thought of your heart be to escape from the outer exposures and threatening skies of doubt, into the shelter of a ready temple and the sympathy of a mighty throng. The deepest form of scepticism is seen in the mind which is in haste to believe; which resolves, by some violent spring, to make an end of darkness, whether the light attained be God's or not; which is not content to follow precisely and *only* where He shows, and cannot rest upon the trustful word, "My soul, wait *patiently* for Him." Something of this *un*faith lurks in the spirit of the new Catholic party. They recognise the ambassadorial credentials of Conscience, and show you on its casket of secrets the very signet of the King of kings:—on opening the despatch-box, you find they have stuffed in all the creeds. The self-deception involved in this is not always unmixed with artifice. All such policy is a half-conscious attempt to suborn God's Spirit on behalf of our own desires and prejudices, and against the doubts and scruples which may be truly His.

Transferring ourselves now from Oxford to Cambridge, we acknowledge at the outset that the *place* has much less to do with the party, in the case of the philosophical movement led by Coleridge, than in that of the ecclesiastical represented by Newman. Yet it was before the University of Cambridge that Julius Hare* first produced the fruits of his meditations at the feet of the poet-philosopher: and it was in Trinity College chapel that he preached the sermons which mark most clearly his theological position.† The Highgate sage had gone to his rest at the very beginning of the Oxford movement (in 1834), and left his disciples to deal with the phenomenon according to their own lights. Mr. Hare had visited the Eternal City, and witnessed there some things which indisposed him to trifle with the honest heart of Protestantism. "I saw the Pope," he used to say, "apparently kneeling in prayer for mankind: but the legs which kneeled were artificial; he was in his chair. Was not that sight enough

* Sermon on "the Children of Light," preached before the University in 1828.

† Sermon on "the Law of Self-sacrifice," 1829; and Sermon on "the Sin against the Holy Ghost," in 1832.

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to counteract all the æsthetical impressions of the worship, if they had been a hundred times stronger than they were?"* He saw at once the part that he should take; and in his first sermon, preached before the clergy of the diocese of Chichester, he vindicated, from the words, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world," the living presence of the invisible Word in His own Person against the sacerdotal delegation claimed, and virtually substituted, by the Tractarians. Profoundly Lutheran in his conception of "faith," and jealous of all interposed media between the Church and her Divine Head, he resisted at the outset the dangers of an official theocracy with an absent God. The offence given to some hearers by this sermon made him hesitate for a time to accept the office of Archdeacon of Lewes. But in overruling his objections, Bishop Otter rightly interpreted the character of his mind; of which the recent sermon was only a partial expression; and which, though impulsive and unsystematic, had too many open and susceptible sides, too rich a culture, and too real a spiritual depth, to restrict its sympathies to any exclusive party.

In fact, the polemic attitude for the moment assumed towards the Anglicans by no means expressed the characteristic of his school. A much deeper and earlier antipathy had called it into existence, and shaped it into form. Coleridge, as all his readers are aware, was in early life a preacher among the Unitarians. Though never having a permanent pastoral charge among them, he was once on the point of settling as a minister at Shrewsbury: and, in withdrawing, he assures the congregation that, while he prefers a freer mode of life, "active zeal for Unitarian Christianity, not indolence or indifference, has been the motive of my declining a local and stated settlement as a preacher of it."† His early poems, and the name of his eldest son, attest the fervour with which he embraced the philosophy of Priestley and Hartley, as well as the "Psilanthropism" of the sect. By the side of the French atheism of the day, these opinions wore a conservative aspect towards Christianity; in the presence of the political "Church-and-King" vulgarity, they seemed generous to liberty; in the total oblivion of deeper speculation, and the absolute dominance of physical method, they satisfied the demand for compactness and system in philosophy. But only the dearth of other waters, and the parching of that desert time, could detain him at this spring. His natural thirst was ever feeling its way to

* See Introduction, page xxvi. (understood to be by Mr. Maurice) to the *Visitation Charges of the Archdeacon of Lewes*, in the years 1843, 1845, 1846; a charming sketch of Hare's character and position, as rich and wise as it is affectionate.

† Letter, dated Shrewsbury, Jan. 19, 1798, to Mr. Isaac Wood, High Street, Shrewsbury. *Christian Reformer* for 1834, page 840.

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more congenial fountains. His speculative creed had never penetrated the unconscious essence of the man, but lay as a texture about him, without growing into the fibres of his heart. In 1796, he records, in a private letter, his experience under sore affliction: "My philosophical refinements and metaphysical theories lay by me in the hour of anguish as toys by the bedside of a child deadly sick."* Never, in short, was the genius of a man more out of its element. An infirm will, a dreamy ideality, a preternatural subtlety of thought, and intense religious susceptibility, were thrown among a people eminently practical and prosaic, impatient of romance, indifferent to intellectual refinements, strict in their moral expectations, scrupulous of the veracities but afraid of the fervours of devotion. The strength and the weakness of each party were vehemently antipathic to those of the other: and their inevitable divergence once begun, the alienation became rapidly complete. Coleridge was a born Platonist, who could not permanently rest content, with Locke, to seek all knowledge in phenomena, or, with Paley, all good in happiness: and on the first opening of his cage of experience, he darted out, and took to his metaphysic wing.

It was Kant who first lifted the bar and set him free; and who, with Schelling, inspired him to seize that border territory between psychology and theology, which had long been declared a dream-land. If any where the relationship can be really witnessed between the human spirit and the divine, it must be on the awful confines of the two; and by taking stand on the ground of our highest consciousness, we may perhaps be able to pass to and fro across the line, and find the breadth of any common margin there may be, and note where, on the one hand, it sinks into pure Nature, and on the other, rises into the absolute God. Here, then, he worked in both directions,—upwards and downwards,—till the two tracks met: with results which, so far as our present object is concerned, may be briefly indicated.

Dr. Newman has himself drawn attention to a remarkable concurrence between his own conceptions and Coleridge's, respecting the sources and limits of natural religion in the human mind.† They agree in seeking the germ of devout belief in the experiences of conscience; in recognising the essentially religious character of morality; in making faith the prior condition of spiritual knowledge, and vindicating the maxim, *Credo, ut intelligam*. Newman, however, represents the moral feeling more as a blind instinctive *datum* to be accepted; Coleridge, more as cognitive power, looking on reality with open eye. And

* Letter to Mr. Benjamin Flower, Editor of the Cambridge Intelligencer. Monthly Repository for 1834, page 654.

† University Sermons, II. p. 24, note.

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further, with Newman there is *no other* original spring of divine knowledge: while Coleridge allows us an intellectual as well as a moral organ for the apprehension of God. Beyond and above the *Understanding*, which generalises from the data of perception, gathers laws from phenomena, frames rules from experience, traces logical consequence and adapts means to ends, he enthrones the *Reason*, which seizes a different *order* of truths—viz. the necessary and universal,—in themselves inconceivable, in their absence contradictory; and in a different *way*—viz. intuitively and immediately, not mediately or through a process. The former (*Verstand*) has the field of *Nature* (that which is *born*,—the originated and transient) for its *object*, and belongs to *our natural part* as its *seat*; and is therefore not peculiar to us, but shared by other animal races,—whose so-called "instinct" is not specifically distinguishable from adaptive intelligence. The latter (*Vernunft*) has the realm of *Spirit* (the *super*-natural, to which the predicates of time and space are inapplicable) for its object, and for its seat in us our spirit or supernatural part. Had we, in combination with our sentient capacity, only understanding, though in ever so eminent a degree, we should remain mere living *things*,—with an honourable place in the records of natural history, but leaving the registers of morals and religion still blank and clasped. The Reason by which a higher life becomes possible divaricates into two functions,—the cognitive and the active; the former giving the roots of all our Ontological thinking,—the ideas of Cause, of Unity, of Infinitude, &c.; the latter furnishing the postulates of all Moral action,—the ideas of Freedom, of Personality, of Obligation. Both the speculative and the practical reason have a voice in our primary religious faith. But the former, alone and by itself, would give us merely an ontological "*One*," a Spinozistic Absolute,—the residuary God of the *à priori* demonstrations: necessitating, no doubt, a self-subsistent Infinite of which atheism can render no account, but leaving us unassured how far predicates of character may be transferred to its mysterious subject. Hence the chief application of speculative reason in theology must always be critical rather than creative; to slay in single combat each successive foe that may arise; but not to proclaim *for whom* it is that the champion stands, and for ever keeps the field. On the other hand, the practical reason or conscience reveals to us the *Holy* God, who is the proper and positive object of our faith; who is doubtless more or less clearly apprehended in proportion to the purity of our discerning and reflecting faculty, but who lurks suspected or half-perceived in the darkest hearts;—if no otherwise, at least in their fears and compunctions: for "remorse is the implicit creed of the guilty."

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The will, as empowered to carry out the ideas of Reason in the realm of Sense,—to make Spirit of avail in Nature,—is by its very function *super*-natural, and cannot be entangled as a constituent in the very system which it is to influence from above. Only the divinely-free can achieve that passage. A footman will run your errand across the town; but it needs a winged Iris or a sandalled Hermes to bear the messages of gods to men. It is precisely in the *freedom of the will* that a person is distinguished from a thing, and becomes a possible subject of moral law. And so is it in the recognition of a good other than the sentient, of an authority transcending all personal preference, of a right over us and our whole cargo of "happiness," actual and potential, that the sense of Duty and the conditions of morality begin. Hence Edwards and the necessarians, Priestley and the materialists, Paley and the Epicureans, depict a universe from which all moral qualities and beings, divine or human, are excluded: and whether reasoning down from God as absolute *Sovereign*, or up from man as simply *sentient*, miss whatever is august and holy in its life.

From the distinction drawn between nature and spirit, it follows that there cannot be such a thing as "*natural* religion." All religion must be *spiritual*, springing as it does exclusively within the supernatural element of us. Nay, more; all religion must be *revealed*, if by that word we mean, "*directly given by Divine communication*," as opposed to mediate discovery of our own. For what and whence are those primary ideas of conscience which constitute or presuppose our deepest, though not our fullest, faith? Are they of our own making?—of our own finding? Have we any thing to do with their genesis? Do they not report to us of the necessary and eternal? And are they not the presence with us of that Eternal, whereof assuredly nothing temporal and finite can report? Is there not profound truth as well as piety in the couplet:

> "None but Thy wisdom knows Thy might:
> None but Thy Word can speak Thy name!"

The reason *in* us is not *personal* to us, but only the manifestation in our consciousness of the infinite reason, presenting us with its supernatural realities, and intrusting to our will their divine rights over our world. It is thus the common ground of the divine and the human, the essential base of their communion, the Logos which is at once the objective truth and the subjective knowledge of God.

These results have thus far been reached psychologically, by beginning with the data of the human soul and tracing their indications upward. But, to meet it, Coleridge also descends, by an ontological track, from the Absolute One to His expression in

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the finite,—a Platonic Logos or Son of God; to whom we are to refer at once the physical kosmos, the divine process in history, and the intimations of reason and conscience. Through this mediator, found alike at the foot of our speculative dialectic and at the summit of our moral analytic, do God and man meet and sustain living relations.

But St. John identifies this Logos with the historical Christ; in whom, therefore, the Infinite reaches not only finite, but concrete and personal manifestation. It is the glory and joy of our humanity that He took it into Himself; and conquering sin in it, purified it, and gave it a seed of higher life. Through uttermost self-sacrifice, He reconciled its deepest sorrows with complete perfection; redeemed it and drew it to God; and made manifest in time the eternal facts of His infinite love,—His personal union with our nature,—and the law of self-sacrifice as the deliverance of His universe.

If we rightly understand the theologians of this school, they do not intend, when they speak of the divine assumption of our nature, to limit their reference to the individual life of Jesus of Nazareth. The Son is united not with this or that particular man only, but with humanity itself as a type; and constitutes, as He ever has constituted, the ground and life of all its good. The blending of the two natures is not a biographical but an "eternal" fact, belonging to the essence of their relation. The particular Incarnation of the evangelical history "*reveals and realises*" the universal truth; to which all its exceptional and marking features,—miraculous birth, agony and crucifixion, resurrection and ascension,—stand related as symbols to the reality,—as passing phenomena that tell the tale of an eternity. They are, indeed, more than this; because they are not,—as symbols may be,—mere signs or instruments of suggestion; but are homogeneous with the thing signified, and integrated with it as its highest momenta.

Following out this interpretation of the redemptive operation of the Son, we may conceive of it in two ways: as in reality always going on, although unrecognised; and as at length revealed in a plenary Incarnation, so as to be henceforth turned out from the unconscious to the conscious state. This last change is in itself a spiritual revolution of the highest order,—like the burst of a universe only felt, and by inches, before, on the eye touched by the finger of Christ. By ceasing to be latent,—by being given to our faith,—the redeeming agency is at once raised to a higher power. Now that we know *who* it is that pleads and strives with our evil nature, we can freely go to meet Him, and He may act from *within* our will as well as from without. His life-giving energy is quite another thing,—since not a *thing* at

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all, but a person,—not even a "better self," but a Divine other-than-self; and confers upon the soul a "*new birth.*" From the life of nature, conscious of only Self disturbed by an impersonal law, we emerge into the life of the spirit, set free by faith, and admitted to personal communion of trust and love. The transition into the "new birth" is the chief element in the redemptive act of the Son. The continuous power of holier life in the heart thus regenerate is the sign and function of the Holy Spirit. Both these,—the crisis of change and its spiritual sequel,—are indeed full of mystery on their objective or Divine side. But from the subjective or human side it is easy to perceive how the consciousness of a Divine Person blended with the humanity of each of us, and the source in it of whatever is higher than we, may be really a new seed of life within us, giving us a holy living Object in place of a repulsive ethical abstraction, and awakening all the powerful affections that ever seek a Personal Centre of repose.

From the whole complexion of this scheme it will be gathered, that the Original Sin countervailed by redemption is not *birth*-sin (which would be natural *disease*, not *moral* evil); and that the redemption is not an extinction of punishment, but a deliverance from sin. It is not that God is paid off, but that man emerges "a new creature." The "evil ground" there is in the human will,—the downward gravitation of self,—the need of a Diviner to draw us to any good by the sacrifice of self,—are simple facts accessible to every man's self-knowledge. And we are well aware that, coexisting with our free agency, they are not our malady, but our fault. Coleridge and his school every where denounce the Calvinistic doctrines of hereditary depravity and of penal satisfaction, as turning man from a person into a thing, and denying to God all moral attributes. The primary conditions of any true theory of redemption are, that the whole operation takes place on humanity; and that it both finds and leaves man a free agent. Neither of these conditions is complied with by any form of the Calvinistic scheme.

Some of the peculiarities of Coleridge most familiar to theologians,—his tetrads and pentads, his doctrine of Church and State, his denial of the documentary inspiration of the whole Bible,—we pass by; not from any slighting estimate of their importance as parts of an organic whole, but in order to insulate the one character,—of *religious Realism*,—which is the inner essence of the system itself, and the living seed of its development in the school of Mr. Maurice. It is chiefly from inapprehension of this character, and from the inveterate training of the English mind in the opposite habit of thought, that so many readers complain of obscurity in the writings of the Chaplain of

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Lincoln's Inn. We do not deny that his meaning is at times difficult to reach; for it is apt to be *delayed* too long by his scrupulous candour of concession, his modest shrinking from self-assertion, his preference of the sympathetic to the distinctive attitude. But we venture with some confidence to assert, that for consistency and completeness of thought, and precision in the use of language, it would be difficult to find his superior among living theologians. It is the old question,—what do you mean by a *clear* or *distinct* thought? Do you mean a mental *image* or *representation* of something, like your conception of a perceptible object or of a finite portion of space or time? Then certainly you will not cease to complain of Mr. Maurice's indistinctness; for he speaks and thinks of Spirit, and Righteousness, and God, as realities without mental picture and yet closely known; and he treats the notions of Infinitude and Eternity as something else than "negative ideas,"—the finite and the temporal with all the meaning emptied out. If, however, by "clearness of idea" you mean, not "*the idea of a limit*," but "*a limit to the idea*,"—if your conditions are satisfied, provided thought does not run into thought, but each keeps its own place and function with exactitude,—then you might as reasonably charge indistinctness on Mr. Mill or Archbishop Whately as on Mr. Maurice. Many parts of his doctrine we are quite unable to follow with assent; but we see no excuse for the absurd distortions of his peculiar Christianity, with which the party-organs of Church and Sect have long abounded. Critics who have read any one of his practical or historical essays, with some feeling of its clear and life-like charm, ought surely to know that if his theology seems difficult to them, it cannot be from his want of practised thought and literary skill, and must arise from their not having at present found his latitude.

Coleridge, commencing in reaction from a scheme of materialistic necessity, gave great prominence to his assertion of free-agency. Not till he had effectually set humanity on its feet again, did he proceed to identify the intimations of its moral reason with the indwelling life of the Divine Word. Mr. Maurice is caught up by this last thought, and has become its organ to the present age; and so intensely does it possess him, that we fear his losing sight too much of the prior truth from which the start was made, and reducing man into a mere prize, to be contended for between the Satan and the God within him. Pushing the claims of a diabolical being far into the evil phenomena of our nature, and those of a Divine Being over the whole of the good, he thins away the space for the free human personality till it becomes at times quite evanescent. This is a danger ever incident to the wish of humility, that nothing should be claimed

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for self,—that all should be referred to God. But it must be restrained from reaching its ultimate limit; or else the ground of morals sinks again away, and, in pantheistic guise, universal necessity absorbs us all once more. We say, "in pantheistic guise;" for, be it observed, the two personalities—the Human and the Divine—must ever appear and disappear *together:* they are the two terms of a relation which wholly vanishes on the merging of either; and though, with safety to both, there is room for considerable variety in the theory of their respective functions, yet should an eye of reverential caution be kept (especially in our day) on the limits of the problem where the foci fall into each other. If, however, Mr. Maurice has too nearly approached this danger, it is under the inspiration of a truth than which there is no greater. The assumption of humanity by the Eternal Word may be construed from above downwards, so as to illustrate the character and agency of God; or from below upwards, so as to throw light on the spiritual experiences of man. In the former view, it gives to our trust and worship One whose chosen life is in our spirits, who moulds us into unities not our own,—of family, of nation, of church,—who is not wearied by our perverseness, but, still pressing His righteousness upon us, is ever redeeming what else were lost. In the latter view, a singular sanctity is imparted to the inner facts of our own existence and the invisible springs of the world's history. All that we inadequately call our *ideals,* the gleaming lights of good that visit us, the hopes that lift again our fallen wills, the beauty which Art cannot represent, the holiness which life does not realise, the love which cannot die with death,—what are they? Not *our* higher, but a *higher than we*—the living Guide Himself, pleading with us and asking for our trust. The actual and concrete, on the other hand, which falls so immeasurably short of these fair types,—the false fact that lies ashamed beneath the true vision,—*that* is our poor *self;* in which is nothing but failure, disappointment, and negation. One simple and only thing is asked from us: to cease trusting this delusive self and go freely into the Hand that waits for us,—to exchange the tension of volition for the quiet of unreserved surrender,—to pass from the chafing mood of "works" to the still heart of "faith." The great original sin of our nature is, that we reverse this order,—that we rely on ourselves and are afraid of God, and accordingly seek, by some act of ours, to buy Him off and be rid of His terrors and persuade Him to let us alone. Whether men endeavour to propitiate Him by relinquishing something that they have, or to serve Him by something that they do, they mistake their position, and measure themselves off against Him as if they had proprietary rights which they could abandon in His favour, or

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some availing righteousness which could satisfy His moral perception. They aim at acting upon Him: and He is wanting to act on them; and will persist till they drop their gifts, and know their failures, and freely come to Him as they are to be moulded by His thought. It was to bring about this removal of distrust towards God, to reveal the law of self-abnegation as Divine and supreme, that the Word became flesh, and passed through its grievous incidents, and entered into sympathetic pity for its sins and fears. The most alienated feeling, once apprehending this manifestation of Divine adoption, could hold out no more. Such an Incarnation, bringing to a focus the perpetual truth of the "God with us," is not a humiliation of the divine nature so much as the glory and joy of the human, and discloses to us not a fallen world but a redeemed, with whose resistance the "Spirit of holiness" will not for ever have to strive. It harmonises with "the belief that man is not an animal carrying about a soul, but a spiritual being with an animal nature, who, when he has sunk lowest into that nature, has still thoughts and recollections of a home to which he belongs, and from which he has wandered."*

The same mode of thought by which the individual life is thus turned into a sanctuary exhibits human society as in its essence a theocracy; and wins for the experiences and polity of the Hebrew race, as particular embodiments of a universal method, a meaning which Lessing's hints ought long ago to have elicited. Not that we mean to press at all closely the analogy between the doctrine of the "Prophets and Kings of the Old Testament," and the "Thoughts on the Education of the Human Race." They are alike in this: that they pull down the fences which had detached the Hebrew life from the great territory of human history, and find a universal function for even what is most exceptional in it. In their mode of procedure, however, they differ: Lessing seeking in the career of the Jewish people the rudiments of an *unfolding* idea; Maurice, the witness to *eternal* truths,—the manifestation by time-samples of infinite realities and unchanging relations. And this difference touches a characteristic of the living divine, which more than any other makes him a perplexity to his contemporary critics. So strong in most Englishmen is the "natural man," as habitually to assume, till they discover whither the maxim leads, that "all we know is phenomena;" or rather they turn all they know *into* phenomena, and contemplate nothing "under the form of eternity." Even their theology is no exception. They *dramatise* it; drawing it out into an *economy* or plot, with different scenes,

* Hare's Charges, Introduction, p. xxi.

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and progressive action, and crises of terror and of rescue, and a grand catastrophe to wind up the whole. Now the elements and incidents of this plan Mr. Maurice takes out of series, and redistributes in synchronous (or rather in timeless) relations. States of *humanity* which we are apt to represent as successive, and to string together as passages of an historical process, he treats as always coexistent in all men,—as abiding attributes or affections of their being. "Original sin," for instance, is not, in his view, a *prior* condition, giving way to "reconciliation" as a *posterior;* but both exist together in all men. And so too *Divine* states, which we are commonly taught to dispose chronologically, cease with him to be separate. Christ the Saviour is usually believed to have first come at the "advent," and to be identical in date with Jesus of Nazareth. But, in Mr. Maurice's view, there never was a time when our race was not equally the abode of His "real presence." "Man, according to his original constitution, was related to Christ;"* who was *in* the heathen world while they were bowing to gods of wood and stone, and *in* Saul while yet the persecutor. The conversion on Damascus' road, and the whole historical gospel, did but *reveal* a Divine person that had never been absent from our humanity. There was not—first, a lost Heathendom; and then, to replace it, a redeemed Christendom: but always, and throughout both, One who was and is redeeming; and many, alas, in each, who resist this recall of them from their outer darkness. This abolition of time-conditions, and redisposal of the same facts as essential and permanent realities, gives the true key to our author's most difficult writings. The transmutation it effects in the doctrine of "eternal punishment" is but one example of its marvellous power of rejuvenescence applied to a theology grown decrepit in routine.

The great strength of this school lies, we think, in its faithful interpretation of what is at once deepest and highest in the religious consciousness of men; and its recognition, in this consciousness, of a concrete and living Divine person, instead of mere abstractions without authority, or the dreams of unreliable imagination. And we may well be grateful for a scheme which establishes a *uniform constitution* of our nature and our world, in *steady* relation to supernatural realities, broken by no revolutionary jerks or local exemptions; and which, therefore, opens a welcome to a scientific ethic, and metaphysic, and history. Nor is its strength merely that of fair promise and earnest appeal. So long as it advances on the ground of religious philosophy, it appears to us to make its footing good: and the first questionable step is, perhaps, at the point where it enters *history*, and

* The Doctrine of Sacrifice. Dedicatory Letter, p. 21.

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hands itself over from Plato to St. John. The identification of the eternal Logos with the historical Christ is at present left to rest upon external authority alone,—and *that* too the authority of a single evangelist. A thoughtful learner in this school might be brought by some Alexandrine Coleridge into a faith like Philo's in the Divine Word, and set within the spiritual forecourt of this gospel. He might next, on testimonial grounds, be led to receive the whole evangelical series of external facts from Bethlehem to the Mount of Ascension. And yet these two termini of his belief might remain in painful discontinuity: and we do not see that the links of relation have hitherto been adequately supplied. If the whole stress is to be laid on the doctrine of the fourth gospel, the question becomes an anxious one, how far the evangelist's thought has taken its complexion from the Master's discourses, —how far infused it into them. For surely, without reopening the discussion of authorship at all, the complete equalisation of tone in this gospel between the discourses and the narrative, rendering it often impossible to mark the boundary between them, is a fact of the utmost moment,—in itself accounted for in either way: and if the discourses are as *unlike* those in the other gospels as they are *like* the personal composition of St. John, the hypothesis most assuring to us respecting their historical character is at an undeniable disadvantage. Shifted from the authentication of Christ himself to that of even "the beloved disciple," the Incarnation of the Logos in Jesus (in the sense required by the theory) would rest on too doubtful a support: for who could say whether we had to do with the revelation itself, or only with the mould of thought into which the disciple threw it?

That this difficulty has not been more felt by the Coleridge divines is due, we believe, to the preoccupation of their minds with intense convictions, thirsting for that which assimilates with them or gains a glory from them. Broad providential lights on history, genial hopes of a less selfish human world, they open to us by their wisdom and their life. And there are parts of Scripture, the Pauline Epistles eminently, and the Prophets in no slight degree, where a darkness readily breaks away at the approach of their characteristic thoughts. Mr. Maurice's *Unity of the New Testament* abounds with happy combinations possible only to a fine spiritual tact. But exegesis has work to do in which other gifts are of more avail than moral perception and religious insight: and then it is that these writers, like their favourite catechetical school of Alexandria, appear to us signally to fail. Who does not smile at Mr. Maurice's explanation of the first chapter of Genesis? And where, in addition, critical judgment and dexterity are required, the result is still worse,—as in his treatment of the genealogies of Jesus. No deficiency in the

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furniture of scholarship causes this phenomenon. It is simply that biblical and historical criticism never succeeds, except in striking out partial lights, when it engages minds deeply tinctured with any metaphysical or spiritual enthusiasm. The eye, accustomed to the eternal realities, loses the quick and flitting glance that best seizes the expression of nature and the phenomena of time.

After all, the real force of this school is independent of scientific imperfections. They are *believing men*—afraid of no reality, despairing of no good, and resolute to test their faith by putting it straightway into life. They set to work to realise the kingdom of God in Soho Square and other nameable localities; and in their step towards this end there is as free, confiding, joyful movement, as if with their eyes they expected to see the great salvation. There is more of the future, we suspect, contained in their gospel than in any talking theology whose cry is heard in our streets.

Hence we feel ourselves to be falling *back* a step, when we turn from the preacher of Lincoln's Inn to the prophet of Chelsea. The influence of the latter, vastly the more intense and widespread, appears to us to have reached its natural limit, and taken up the portion of believers allotted to it. As a revolutionary or pentecostal power on the sentiments of Englishmen, it is perhaps nearly spent; and, like the romantic school of Germany, will descend from the high level of a faith to the tranquil honours of literature. So long as Mr. Carlyle spoke with any *hope* to the inward reverence of men, and in giving voice to their spiritual discontents made them feel that they were emerging from mean scepticisms into nobler inspirations, he was a deliverer to captives out of number. But the early voice of hope has become fainter and fainter, first passing into an infinite pathos, and then lost in humorous mocking or immeasurable scorn: and men cannot be permanently held by their antipathies and distrusts, and cease to look for any thing from a rebellion that never ends in peace. He gets us well enough out of Egypt and all its filthy idolatries; but, alas! his Red Sea will not divide, and the promised land is far as ever, and the question presses, whether "we are to die in the wilderness?" For a just estimate of Mr. Carlyle as an historian and man of letters the time is not yet come. But his specific action on the *religion* of the age (of which alone we speak) already belongs in a great measure to the past, and is little likely to offer new elements for appreciation.

It is difficult now to transfer ourselves back into the age, not yet faded however from living memory, when Boileau and Kames were great canonists in the world of letters, and criticism occupied the mortal form of Dr. Blair. Of what stuff the young souls of

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that age could be made we cannot imagine, if they really found nutriment in solemn trifles about the unities and proprieties,—the choice of diction,—the length of sentences,—the nature of tropes,—and the rhetorical temperature required for interjection and apostrophes. Mr. Carlyle, among other contemporaries, certainly rose with indignant hunger from such a table of the gods, symmetrically spread with polished covers and nothing under them. In mere analysis of the machinery of expression or even thought, in rules for the manufacture of literary effects, he could find no response to the enthusiasm kindled in him by his favourite authors. The true ambrosia of the inner life was turned into dry ash by the legislators of *belles lettres:* and he was courageous enough to ask for the missing and immortal element. The same external direction had been taken by philosophy, and produced the same consciousness of a miserable void. The searching scepticism of Hume showed the dreary results to which the mere analysis of "experience" compendiously led. And the devices of utilitarian *cuisine* for putting pleasure into the pot and drawing virtue out betrayed the loss of the very idea of morals. The very things which this desiccating rationalism flung off, were to Mr. Carlyle just the essence and whole worth of the universe: and to show that beauty, truth, and goodness, could not thus be got rid of, while impostors were hired to bear their name; that religion is not hope and fear, or duty prudence, or art a skill to please; that behind the sensible there lies a spiritual, and beneath all relative phenomena an absolute reality,—was evidently, if not his early vow, at least his first inspiration. Surely it was an authentic appointment to a noble work: and on looking back over his quarter-century, no one can deny that it has been manfully achieved.

By what providence Mr. Carlyle learned the German language, in days when the study of it was rare, we cannot tell. But through it he evidently was enabled to "find his soul;" and gained confidence to proclaim the faith which was stirring from its sleep within, and at once woke up at the sight of its reflected image without. That revolt against rationalism which Dr. Newman apparently *used,* and directed for preconceived ends and in the service of an "economy," presents itself in Mr. Carlyle with all its veracious freshness. The same positions that approve themselves to the Oxford Catholic as suitable hypotheses, and to the Highgate philosopher as rational axioms, are seized by the living intuition of the Scottish seer;—that wonder and reverence are the condition of insight and the source of strength;—that faith is prior to knowledge, and deeper too;—that empirical science can but play on the surface of unfathomable mysteries;—that in the order of reality the ideal and invisible is the world's

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true adamant, and the laws of material appearance only its alluvial growths. In the inmost thought of men there is a thirst to which the springs of nature are a mere mirage, and which presses on to the waters of eternity. Extinguish this thirst by stupefaction of custom,—reduce thought to work *without* wonder,—and several delusions, both doleful and ridiculous, will speedily obtain high commissions in human affairs. The true marvel of Origination being lost, a "cause-and-effect philosophy" will esteem every thing solved when it has shown how each nine-pin in the universe knocks down the next. The spiritual germ and essence of humanity being forgot or denied, a "doctrine of circumstances" will discuss the prospect of furnishing to order any required supply of poets, philosophers, or able administrators,—like so many varieties of farm-stock. The idea of a God-given freedom being dismissed with the phantoms of "the dark ages," a calculus of "motives" will be invented for finding the roots of every human problem, and raising any given sentient man to any required moral power. The genuine ground of all communion with the Infinite having sunk away within us, all sorts of logical proofs, and logical disproofs, will quarrel together about primitive certainties that shroud themselves from both. In all these complaints, the substantive concurrence of our author with Mr. Coleridge is conspicuous. And though, in his *Life of Sterling*, the humour has seized him to ridicule the "windy harangues" and dizzying metaphysics of the Highgate soirées, there was a time when he had no little faith in the same methods as well as large agreement in the same results. In his earlier essays, *he* too expounds the distinction between "Understanding" and "Reason," and sets up the latter as the organ for apprehending the ideal essence, which is the true *real* of things. He speaks with reverential appreciation of Kant's doctrine, both metaphysical and moral; and with hope as well as admiration of the several æsthetic theories developed from similar beginnings. In short, he manifestly put an early trust in the philosophical method to which Coleridge remained faithful to the last. And not less manifestly did he soon break away from this path in despair; and with characteristic vehemence thenceforth inveigh against the propensity to seek it as an illusion of disease. In 1827, he defended the *Kritik der reinen Vernunft* against ignorant objectors, as reputed by competent judges to be "distinctly the greatest intellectual achievement of the century in which it came to light;" and dwelt with approval on the rule that, in quest of the highest truth, we must look *within*, and thence work outward with the torch we have lit. Yet in 1831 he broached, in his *Characteristics*, his celebrated doctrine of "Unconsciousness:" which teaches that all self-knowledge is

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a curse, and introspection a disease; that the true health of a man is to have a soul without being aware of it,—to be disposed of by impulses which he never criticises,—to fling out the products of creative genius without looking at them. In a word, the *reflective* thought on which, in the former year, he had relied for the purest wisdom, had in the latter become the sin and despair of humanity. What can have befallen in the interval? Had the author meanwhile *tried* the metaphysic springs, and after due patience found them, not simply "saints' wells," with no healing in them, but poison-fountains, that made the sickly soul yet sicklier? We do not believe it: for there is nowhere any trace that the first clue of entrance into the German philosophy had been followed up; and on the other hand, every indication that Mr. Carlyle's denunciation of metaphysics is the mere judgment of an intuitive genius on methods of reflection, which, however helpful to slower and more formal minds, it is not given him to take. Had he been able to retain and pursue his first hope,—had he taken the severe path of philosophical discipline, and surrendered himself to its promise of deliverance,—we hardly think that we should ever have heard that passionate cry of despair, which proclaims the distinctive glory of man to be his irremediable woe, and asserts that, in finding *himself*, he for ever falls from heaven. The preacher of this doctrine had already started problems within himself, to which no answer (as his own word declares) could be found but by faithful questioning within: and it is a serious thing to go thus far, and yet not abide long enough to hear the reply. But instead of this, he flings away the very problems with a shriek, as the fruit by which paradise is lost; repents of all knowledge of good and evil; claps a bandage round the open eyes of morals, religion, art; and sees no salvation but in spiritual suicide, by plunging into the currents of instinctive nature that sweep us we know not whither. This tragic paradox has, indeed, a generous source, and is even thrown up by a certain wild tumultuous piety. It springs from a deep sense of the hatefulness of self-worship, and the barrenness of mere self-formation. It is a stormy prayer for escape from these; only with face turned, alas! in the wrong direction—*back* towards the west, with its fading visions of Atlantic islands of Unconsciousness, instead of *forwards* to the east, where already the heavens are pale with a light, instead of a darkness, not our own.

Though this despair of the highest objective truth could not fail, in the long-run, to produce pathetic and tempestuous results, yet for a while the mere deliverance from the negations of the empirical schools sufficed for a gospel: and the new sense of divine mystery and meaning, behind all that met the common eye,

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was little else in effect than a revelation. A certain consecration fell on what had been quite secular before: and with this peculiarity, that its influence spread as an underground beneath the foundations of objects and pursuits previously disconnected, and became a common conductor of fresh reverence into them all. Literature, art, politics, natural knowledge, seemed to sit less apart from religion. Heave off the utilitarian incubus from above, and secret affinities begin to be felt at the roots of their life. When it is no longer "the sole aim" of poetry "to please," of science to "get fruit" for the storehouses of comfort, of government "to protect body and goods," of sculpture and painting to minister to luxury,—they obtain ideal ends, which in essence melt and merge together; and all of them—beauty, truth, and righteousness—culminate in the reality of God. Whatever the theologians may say, the age owes a debt of rare gratitude to the man who, above all others, has awakened this new sense within its soul; has touched with a strange devoutness many a class which book and surplice had ceased to awe; has taken the impertinent self-will out of the movements of pencil, pen, and chisel; and made even Mechanics' Institutions ashamed of their incipient millennium of "useful knowledge." The influence of Mr. Carlyle's writings, and especially of his *Sartor Resartus*, has been primarily exerted on classes of men most exposed to temptations of egotism and petulance, and least subjected to any thing above them,—academics, artists, littérateurs, "strong-minded" women, "debating" youths, Scotchmen of the phrenological grade, and Irishmen of the Young-Ireland school. In the altered mood of mind which has been induced in these various groups within the last five-and-twenty years we acknowledge a conspicuous good; and could even hear, with more of sadness than of condemnation, the passionate words that once burst from the lips of a believer: "Carlyle is my religion!"

The *unity*, however, which our prophet's mystic sense discerns among our human "arts and sciences" is *too* great: and we must reclaim from him a distinction which not even the fusing power of his genius can do more than blur and conceal. Not in the *human and moral* world only, but *quite similarly in the physical*, does he see the expression of the Infinite and Divine. Both are alike symbols of the one spiritual essence, which is hid from the blind, and revealed to the wise, in all. He does not, like Coleridge, separate *nature* and *spirit* into two realms, quite differently related to Him who is the source of both,—the one His moulded fabric, the other His free image,—but treats them indiscriminately as the vehicles of His manifestation, and phenomena through which the Divine force pours. This is not, indeed, done by sinking humanity into a mere object of natural history; rather by raising the

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objects of natural history up to the spiritual level, adding significance to them, instead of taking it from us. But still, man is not permitted to remain quite *sui generis:* he is simply the *highest* of the countless emblems woven into the universal "garment of God." The texture is one and homogeneous throughout:—in one sense all natural, as a determinate product in time; in another, all supernatural, as mysteriously issuing from eternity. The same comprehensive formula,—the appearance of the Infinite in the finite,—serves every where, and equally describes "the lily of the field" and the Redeemer who interpreted its meaning.

Did we want to turn human life into a mere school of Art, there might be nothing very fatal in the looseness of this doctrine. An impartial conception of some Divine idea in every thing may clear away the film of sense, and open to view the life of much that else were dead. To rend away the veil is the grand condition for enabling the eye to see: whoever does this, may talk as he pleases of the realities behind; they will vindicate themselves. Yet even for truth of *representation*, and infinitely more for faithfulness of character and action, a distinctive reverence for man as *more than natural*, as the abode of God in a sense quite false of clouds and stars, as intrusted with himself that he may surrender to a higher,—is indispensable. For want of this, Mr. Carlyle loses all ground of difference between the *natural* and the *right*,—the out-come of tendency and the free creations of conscience. He is tempted into excessive admiration of mere realising strength, irrespective of any higher test of spiritual worth. Whatever can get upon its feet, and persist in standing on this world, is vindicated in his eyes, and exhibited as a sample of the "eternal laws:" while that which has nothing to show for itself except that it *ought to be*,—righteousness that knocks in vain at the door of visible "fact,"—meets with no sympathy from him, and is even jeered for its foolish patience in still sitting on the step with unremitting prayer. True, he does not admit the rights of possession till after a pretty long term, and knows how to treat the "shams" and upstarts of to-day, the "flunkey" powers that usurp more venerable place, with withering scorn:—still, however, for a reason which would equally condemn an aspiration transcending human conditions, viz. because they are at variance with the laws of the actual, and are sure to be disowned by the baffling solidity of nature. Against the fickle multitude of momentary facts and popular semblances, he sides with the conservative aristocracy of natural laws; but recognises no divine monarchy with prerogatives over both. The kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of nature being identical, neither transcending the other, but being related only as inner meaning and outward expression, no margin is left for an

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ideal other than the long-run of the *actual*,—for an "*ought*" beyond the "*can*,"—for a will of God surpassing finite conditions. Hence Mr. Carlyle's habit of resolving all ethical evil into "insincerity" and "unveracity,"—surely a most inadequate formula for the expression of even commonplace moral judgments. Extend these terms ever so much,—use them to denote *unconscious* as well as *conscious* self-variance,—nay, include in them also defiance of *nature and outward possibility*,—still, what far-fetched circuits must be taken before you can bring under such a definition the sins of envy, covetousness, resentment, and prudent licentiousness! The root of this delusive conception of human goodness lies in the pantheistic assumption, that to fly in the face of natural forces is to withstand the highest that there is; and its fruit, when fully ripe, cannot fail to be an indifference to many a natural sin,—a lowering of the ideal standard of conscience, and a derision of baffled yet trusting righteousness. Every reader of Mr. Carlyle can remember painful instances of entire abdication of all moral judgment on atrocious actions and abandoned men,—a Mirabeau and a September massacre: nay, even ridicule of the whole distinction of moral and immoral applied to actions, as "the blockhead's distinction;" and many a hint that the difference lies only in the *customariness* (*mores*) of one practice as compared with another. Did it never occur to him to ask whether it is the human usages that make the moral sense, or not rather the moral sense that makes the human usages?

Yet this questionable doctrine, often provoked into expression by some senseless prudery or ungenial rigour, is very far from representing the author's real and deepest mind. Flashes of purer light meet you not rarely, especially in his earlier writings. Who can forget how, in the hour of uttermost desolation, amid the wildest storm of unbelief, the sheet-anchor of the unhappy Teufelsdröckh was the "*infinite nature of Duty*;" and in this form never, in his utmost extremity, did the Divine presence desert him? And are we not told, in many changing tones, that in obedience and reverence alone can any true freedom be found? that we are to recognise God in the *higher* life within us, as opposed to the pleasure-life? that we can find Him only by self-renunciation? In these ingenious days, when no one proposition is so rude as to contradict any other, some disciple of the "many-sided" poet, or some proficient in the "dialectic process," may be able to harmonise such sentiments with the assertion that "*man cannot but obey whatever he ought to obey*." At present we do not pretend to have reached the "higher unity" in which appeals to our freedom coalesce with the assertion of universal necessity.

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To pull up the fence between "nature" and "spirit" within us is to throw the Understanding and the Character into the same field. We are therefore prepared for the celebrated paradox, that intellect and goodness always go together; so that, of mental insight and moral soundness, either may be taken as the measure of the other. If by "intellect" and "insight" is meant exclusively what Coleridge calls "*reason*," this statement not only ceases to be a paradox, but becomes almost a truism: for it is the chief function of this power to make us conscious of moral truth and obligation; and the consciousness fades when faithlessly neglected. But if these terms refer to what Coleridge calls "*understanding*,"—if the possession of this endowment constitutes a claim upon them,—then the doctrine is conspicuously false: for the "adaptive intelligence," being an *animal* faculty, is entirely separable from moral conditions; actually exists without them in many tribes of creatures; and in man simply rises to a quickness of generalisation and a skill in the use of means which imply nothing respecting the wise estimate or the faithful pursuit of *ends*. Low passions and selfish impulses are quite capable of enlisting on their behalf all the resources of this mental gift; their partnership with which gives us the idea of a satanic nature. Mr. Carlyle, we believe, means to say, that *this* sort of "understanding" he will not acknowledge as intellect; it is a mere "beaver" or "fox" faculty, not to be noticed among the distinctions of man. Not till you have got beyond mechanical ingenuity and lawyer adroitness do you enter on the proper *human* territory; within which, capacity and character go together. This interpretation, throwing us upon Coleridge's upper region, reduces the maxim to an intelligible truth. But will Mr. Carlyle consent to take it with all its fair consequences? Will he, without flinching, read the truth *both* ways,—inferring *either* term of this constant ratio ("*intellectual*" and "*moral*") from the magnitude of the other? We know that, where he discovers (as in Mirabeau) great force of *mind*, he is ready to plead this in bar of all objections against *character*, and to insist that, in spite of appearances, such brightness of eye *must* carry with it soundness of conscience. But will he turn the problem round, and abide by it still? When he finds, deep hid in the retreats of private life, a goodness eminent and even saintly, a moral clearness and force great in their way as Mirabeau's keen-sightedness, will he accept the sign in evidence of mighty intellect? Will he say that, notwithstanding the meek and homely look, high genius must assuredly be there? We fear not: at least, we remember no instance in which the inference is set with its face this way; whilst it is familiar to all his readers as an excuse for admirations startling to the moral sense. In truth, this maxim,

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more perhaps than any other indication, expresses the *pagan* character of our author's mind; his alienation from the distinctively Christian type of reverence, rather for the inner sanctities of self-renunciation than for the outward energies of self-assertion. His "hero-worships" certainly present us with a list far from concurrent with the "beatitudes:" nor can we fancy that he would listen with much more patience than a Lucian or a Pliny to blessings on the meek and merciful, the pure in heart, the ever-thirsty after righteousness. For him too, as for so many gifted and ungifted men, the force which will not be stopped by any restraint on its way to great achievement,—the genius which claims to be its own law, and will confess nothing diviner than itself,—have an irresistible fascination. His eye, overlooking the landscape of humanity, always runs up to the brilliant peaks of *power:* not, indeed, without a glance of love and pity into many a retreat of quiet goodness that lies safe beneath their shelter; but should the sudden lightning, or the seasonal melting of the world's ice-barriers, bring down a ruin on that green and feeble life, his voice, after one faint cry of pathos, joins in with the thunder and shouts with the triumph of the avalanche. Ever watching the strife of the great *forces* of the universe, he, no doubt, sides on the whole against the Titans with the gods: but if the Titans make a happy fling, and send home a mountain or two to the very beard of Zeus, he gets delighted with the game on any terms and cries, "Bravo!"

The *Sartor Resartus* finds the manifestation of God in the *entire life* of the universe; in visible nature; in individual man, and especially his *higher* mind; in the march and process of history; and in the organic development of humanity as a whole. The author's tendency, however, has increasingly been to retreat from all other media of Divine expression upon his favourite centre,—the genius and energy of *heroic men.* So much has he gathered-in his lights of interpretation upon this focus, as to incur the charge of setting up the personality of individuals as the single determining agency in the affairs of the world, and forgetting the larger half of the truth, that all persons, taken one by one, are but elements of a great social organism, to whose laws of providential growth they must be held subordinate. History cannot be resolved into a mere series of biographies: nor can the individual be justly estimated in his insulation, and tried by the mere inner law of his own particular nature. It would be a melancholy outlook for the world, if its courses were simply contingent on the genius and life of a few great men, without any security from a general law behind that they should appear at the right time and place, and with the aptitudes for the needful work. And, on the other hand, were the life of

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nations to be expended in nothing else than the production of its half-dozen heroes; were this splendid but scanty blossoming the great and only real thing it does, there would seem to be a wasteful disproportion between the mighty forest that falls for lumber and the sparse fruit that would lie upon your open hand. There is need, therefore, of some more manifest relation between individual greatness and the collective life of humanity; and to save us from egoism, from fatalism, from arbitrary and capricious morals, we must learn to recognise a divine method of development in both,—*primarily*, in race and nation, and with authority over the *secondary* functions of personal genius.

That Mr. Carlyle's "hero-worship" requires to be balanced by a supplementary doctrine of society and collective humanity, he would himself perhaps be disposed to allow. But what is this supplement to be? Is it merely to teach that the *individual* is to hold himself at the disposal of *the whole?* to correct his conscience by the general tradition or the permanent voice of humanity; to sink his egoism, to temper it by immersion in the universal element, and become the organ of the progress of the species? Far be it from us to deny that there may be men susceptible of inspiration from such a faith,—capable of dying for such abstractions as a "law of development," of being torn limb from limb out of regard for "the whole." Still less would we disparage by one word a heroism all the nobler for the faint whispers that suffice to waken it into life. Yet we cannot help feeling that in these impersonal ideas,—of "collective society," "law of the whole," "destination of mankind," &c.—there is a want of natural authority over the conscience, and, missing the conscience, over the personal impulses of individual men. In the mere notions of "whole and part," of "organism and member," of "average rule and particular case," there resides no *moral* element, no *rights over the will:* and if ever they seem to carry such functions, it is only because a deeper feeling lurks behind and lends them the insignia of a prerogative not their own. In a world of mere "general laws," it would ever remain a melancholy thing to see living heroes and saints struck down at the altar of "historical tendency" by some shadowy dagger of necessity. Love, enthusiasm, devotion, need some concrete and living object; if not to command their allegiance, at least to turn it from sorrow into joy. And you have but to translate your "progress of the species" into "Kingdom of Heaven," and the problem is solved. The ever-living God stands in Person between the "individual" and the "whole,"—by His communion mediating between them,—stirring in the conscience of the one, and constituting the tides of advancing good in the other,—and so engaging both in one spiritual life. Surrendering imme-

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diately to Him, instead of to the ultimate ratios of the world, faithful men fling themselves into Omnipotent sympathy, and find deliverance and repose. They have a trust that relieves them of every care; and can leave themselves to be applied to the great account and problem of the world by One who is in the midst, and from the first, and at the end, at once. Through Him, therefore, as the common term of all righteousness, must the collective humanity win its due rights and reverence from Each. The private conscience ceases to be private, the public claim to be merely public, when both are to us the instant pleadings of His living authority. In obeying them, we yield neither to a mixed multitude of our own kind, whose average voice is no better than our own, nor even to our mere higher self; but to the august Revealer of whatever is pure and just and true. In enforcing its traditions and inheritance of right, the Nation or Society of men is not proudly riding on its own arbitrary will, but recognising the trust committed to it and serving as the organism of eternal rectitude.

It is for want of this deliverance from Self at the upper end, that Mr. Carlyle, resolute to break the ignoble bondage on any terms, proposes escape at the lower end; and, preaching up the glories of "Unconsciousness," sighs for relapse into the life of blind impulsive tendency. With him, we confess the curse; we groan beneath its misery; but we see from it a double path,—backward into Nature, forward into God,—and cannot for an instant doubt that the Self-consciousness which is the beginning of Reason is never to recede, but to rise and free itself in the transfiguration of Faith. Deny and bar out this hope, and who can wonder if the sharpest remedies for man's selfish security are welcomed with a wild joy; if *any* convulsion that shall strip off the green crust of artificial culture and lay bare the primitive rock beneath us, appears as a needful return of the fermenting chaos? How else are the elementary forces of instinctive nature to reassert their rights and *begin again* from their unthinking freshness? In some such feeling as this we find, perhaps, the source, in Mr. Carlyle, of that terrible glee that seems to flame up at the spectacle of revolutionary storms, and to dart with mocking gleams of devilry and tender streaks of humanity over a background of "divine despair." Indeed we could not wish for a better illustration of the two paths of escape from Self,—back into Nature, forward into God,—than the contrast of Carlyle and Maurice in the whole colouring and climate of their spirit: the sad, pathetic, scornful humour of the one, capricious with laughter, tears, and anger, and expressive of manful pity and endurance, alike removed from fear and hope; and the buoyant, serene, trustful temper of the other, genial even in its indignation, and penetrated with the joy of an Infinite Love.

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The three schools of doctrine at which we have thus rapidly glanced occupy the most distant points in the English religion of the present age; or, at least, in the new fields of tendency which it has opened. It may seem a vain quest to look for any thing common to the whole. Yet when they are interpreted by their inner spirit, rather than by their outward relations, one thought will be found secreted at the heart of all—the perennial Indwelling of God in Man and in the Universe. This is the distinct gain that has been won by the spiritual consciousness of the time; and that already enriches fiction and poetry, art and social morals, not less than direct theology. In the preceding criticisms we have said enough to show that we are not indifferent to the mode and form of doctrine in which this thought is embodied. But however threatening the mists from which it has to clear itself, it is the dawn of a truth,—a blush upon the East,—wakening up trustful hearts to thanksgiving and hope. We know well the anger and antipathy of all the elder parties towards every phase of the new sentiment. We are accustomed to their absurd and heartless attempt to divide all men between the two poles of their logical dilemma,—either absolute Atheism, or else "our" orthodoxy. But these are only symptoms that the new wine cannot go into the old bottles. They do but betray the inevitable blindness of party-life,—the increasing self-seeking, the loss of genial humility, the conceit of finished wisdom, which mark the decadence of all sects. Precisely in the middle of this pretended alternative of necessity,—far from "Atheism" on the one hand, and from most "orthodoxies" on the other,—stand at this moment the vast majority of the most earnest, devout, philosophic Christians of our time; men with trust in a Living Righteousness, which no creed of one age can adequately define for the fresh experiences given to the spirit of another. To them, and not to the noisy devotees and pharisees of party, do we look for the faith of the future.

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A LIST OF RECENT WORKS SUITABLE FOR BOOK-SOCIETIES.

An Introduction to the Study of the Old Testament. By Alfred Barry, M.A. John W. Parker and Son.

A Rationale of Justification by Faith. Hamilton and Adams.

[A thoughtful and able theological essay. It is written mainly from the point of view taken by the Coleridge theologians. So far as it falls short of this, in the effort to be more orthodox, it seems to us to lose its own footing.]

On Truth and Error. Thoughts, in prose and verse. By John Hamilton (of St. Ernan's), M.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge. Macmillan and Co.

The State of France before the Revolution, 1789. By M. de Tocqueville. John Murray.

[The most mature work on political philosophy published in recent times.]

Memoirs of the Marquis of Montrose. By Mark Napier. 2 vols. Hamilton and Adams.

[This enlargement of the same author's "Life and Times of Montrose" contains much new and valuable historical material. The author's politics are exceedingly prejudiced, and his style rather tumid.]

Memoirs of Frederick Perthes. From the German of Clement Theodore Perthes, Professor of Law in the University of Bonn. 2 vols. Hamilton and Adams.

[A piece of extremely minute German biography, referring to a period of great social and political interest. The simplicity, strength, and heartiness of Perthes' character make him an admirable type of the non-speculative but cultivated portion of the German middle classes.]

Beaumarchais and his Times. Vols. 3 and 4. Addey and Co.

The Espousals. By the Author of "The Angel in the House." J. W. Parker.

[A second instalment of a genuine poem, worthy of, if not quite equal to, the first portion.]

Bothwell. A Poem. By W. Edmondstoune Aytoun, D.C.L. Blackwood.

[A poem of rather level history, not without tasteful passages. It may be read once, but hardly a second time.]

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England in Time of War. By Sydney Dobell. Smith, Elder, and Co.

[Noticed in Article VII.]

Essays, Critical and Imaginative. By Professor Wilson. Vol. 1. Blackwood.

[Containing many charming papers, scarcely inferior to those in "The Recreations of Christopher North."]

The Sketcher. By the Rev. John Eagles, M.A., Oxon. Originally published in "Blackwood's Magazine." Blackwood.

[Artistic chat, scarcely worthy of separate publication.]

English Traits. By R. W. Emerson. Routledge and Co.

[Often epigrammatic, sometimes fanciful, but every where readable.]

The Cauvery, Kistnah, and Godavery. Being a Report on the Works constructed on these rivers for the irrigation of the provinces of Tanjore, Guntoor, Masulipatam, and Rajahmundry, in the Presidency of Madras. By R. Baird Smith, F.G.S. Smith, Elder, and Co.

[We have heard of a book-society that ordered "Johnson's Dictionary" and "Burns' Justice." To one much less solidly disposed these valuable maps and the report will be a welcome study. No one who has read Colonel Cotton's little book on the irrigation of India can find a subject uninteresting which closely concerns the lives of so many millions of our subjects.]

Narrative of the Expedition of an American Squadron to the China Seas and Japan, 1852-4. By M. C. Perry. Vol. 1. Trübner.

Letters from Paraguay and Brazil. By the late Charles Mansfield, M.A., Clare Hall, Cambridge. With a Sketch of the Author's Life, by Charles Kingsley, Rector of Eversley. Macmillan and Co.

[Rambling notes of a rambling journey in South America, agreeable to read.]

The Oxonian in Norway; or Notes of Excursions in that Country. By the Rev. Frederick Metcalfe, M.A., Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford. 2 vols. Hurst and Blackett.

Sight-seeing in Germany and the Tyrol, in the autumn of 1855. By Sir John Forbes. Smith, Elder, and Co.

[This book tells us the things to see, but little more. It is a guide-book. The Tyrol portion will not compare at all in merit with Mr. White's charming account of his pedestrian tour there, also recently published.]

Our Captivity in Russia. With an Account of the Blockade of Kars. By Colonel Atwell Lake, C.B. Bentley.

Young Singleton. By Talbot Gwynne. 2 vols. Smith, Elder, and Co.

[Not without cleverness, but disagreeable.]

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